



Spring night on the town

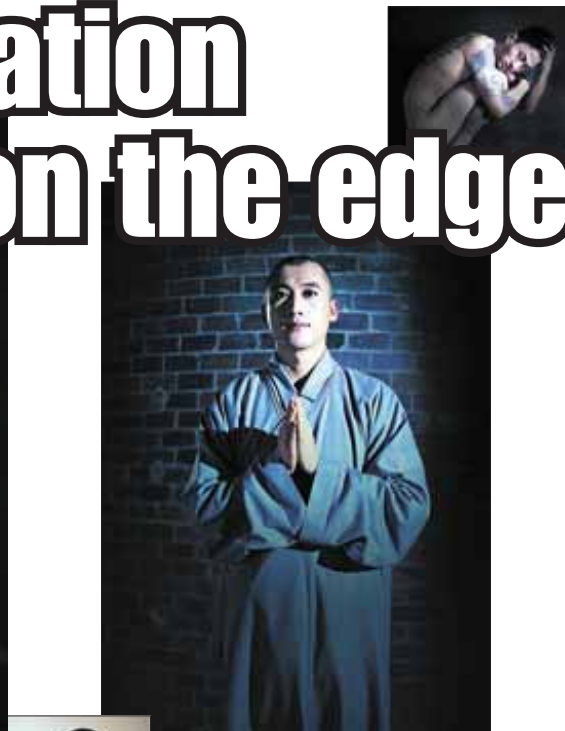
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Lost temples in Houhai

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A generation on the edge



When Zhang Yuan was filming *Beijing Bastards* 17 years ago, he lived on that fringe of society he was trying to capture. Today, the middle-aged director is turning his lens to the 1980s generation who came to Beijing chasing opportunity.

The city may be the same as the one of the dreamers 20 years ago, but those on the fringe today face new problems. Their stories and photos will be part of Zhang's upcoming project, *Unspoiled Brats*.

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NEWLY RENOVATED! SPORTS & MUSIC ARENA



Gov investigates chance of bad vaccines in Shanxi

The Ministry of Health is investigating reports that defective vaccines killed or sickened almost 80 children in Shanxi Province, according to a statement posted on its website Wednesday.

The ministry asked provincial health authorities to report abnormalities caused by the vaccines as soon as possible, the statement said.

Field investigations by reporters found that vaccines for encephalitis, hepatitis B and rabies, as

well as several other diseases, killed four children and sickened at least 74, the *China Economic Times* reported Wednesday.

The report said Shanxi Province had been selling bad vaccines since 2006, causing viral encephalitis after vaccination, and released the names of 15 ill children.

The report accused the Shanxi Center for Disease Prevention and Control of exposing vaccines to heat in summer, causing quality problems.

Earlier reports of defective vaccines prompted the ministry to conduct a joint inspection with the State Food and Drug Administration in November 2008. Random samples were tested, but no quality problems were found, the statement said.

Li Shukai, deputy director of the Shanxi Health Department, denied the accusations and said the report was "basically not true."

He said the provincial health

authorities investigated several cases mentioned in the report in 2007.

"After a thorough appraisal and examination, the provincial expert team believed that they were not abnormalities caused by the vaccines," he said.

Li said the Shanxi Health Department is investigating the cases of the 15 ill children named by the *China Economic Times*.

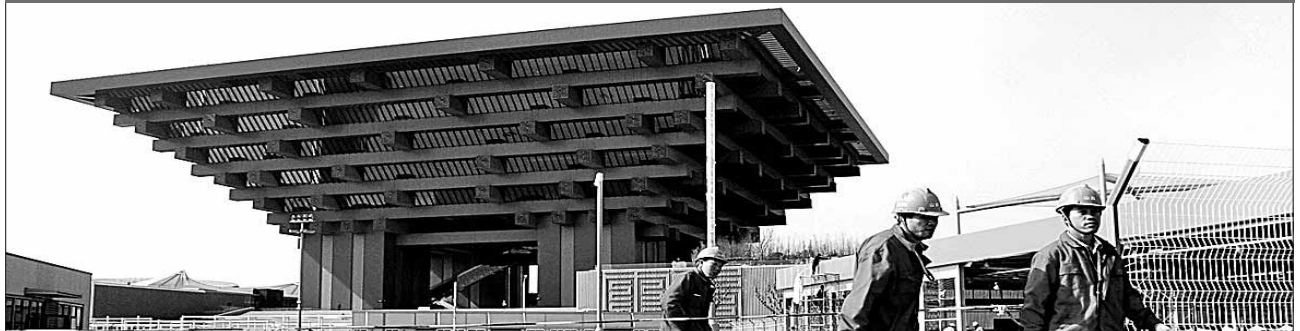
The ministry's investigations

in November 2008 showed that from January 2006 to November 2008, 11 children reported discomfort after being vaccinated in Shanxi Province.

Among these, six were identified as normal reaction. Four abnormal reactions were diagnosed as being unrelated. The only vaccine-related abnormality was not caused by vaccines listed in the report, the ministry said.

(Xinhua)

Chinese, expats find much in common in national image survey



Experts hope the upcoming Shanghai World Expo will offer another chance to build up the country's image.

IC Photo

By Liang Meilan

Locals and expats agree that China is on the rise, according to a new survey.

At a Tuesday press conference for China Development Forum 2010, the first survey on China's image and status was released.

Titled "Recognition and Expectation: A Survey of Chinese National Status in the Eyes of Foreigners and Chinese Citizens," the survey was conducted by the China Development Research Foundation (CDRF) and Horizon Research Consultancy Group.

The study collected public opinion on issues including the country's rise, its impact on international soci-

ety, its role in world affairs and its image according to foreign media, and major concerns like political transparency and livelihood.

Respondents were 1,754 Chinese citizens and 313 expats between the ages of 18 and 65. They were selected in a multi-stage random sampling of seven cities: Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Wuhan, Chengdu, Harbin and Xi'an.

The content of the report is divided into two parts: recognition of China's rise and national status and the suggestions and expectations for improving its image.

More than 80 percent agreed China is on the rise, and 90 percent said the country's rise would have a

positive impact on the world.

Nearly all Chinese respondents said the country is headed in the right direction: 80 percent of expats agreed.

Another 80 percent of respondents said most Chinese people enjoy an equal or better standard of living compared to the world average.

"Though scores were high on national affairs, most people were unsatisfied with their livelihood," said Jiang Jian, project manager of the survey and research manager of Horizon Group. According to the report, among seven critical problems, the issue of layoffs and employment was number one, fol-

lowed by medical reforms and housing prices.

Balancing the gap between rich and poor was listed as the country's most pressing goal.

With regard to international affairs, opinions varied. Expats called on China to get involved in fighting terrorism, international peacekeeping and safeguarding Asia-Pacific regional security. The US was deemed both China's most important economic partner and biggest threat.

The three domestic policies most influencing China's image were the country's environmental policy, energy policy and human rights policy.

"This public opinion poll offers valuable background information for the China Development Forum 2010 this weekend. Most of views on China's image come from domestic or overseas media: this is the first scientific study of both Chinese and expats' true feelings," Tang Min, deputy secretary of CDRF, said.

The China Development Forum is an annual major event held by the Development Research Center of the State Council since 2000. It is a platform where the international business and academic community can interact with the country's top decision makers, economic planners and academics to discuss future development.

Scattering the solution to city's graveyard woes

By Li Zhixin

To offset the demand for new cemetery plots and columbariums, the Municipal Bureau of Civil Affairs is calling on green-minded citizens to scatter their relatives' ashes.

The bureau introduced a series of measures to regulate funeral and cremation services before Tomb Sweeping Day, which is April 5 this year.

To encourage the scattering of ashes at sea, the municipal government is bearing all expenses. "Ashes will be scattered at Bohai Bay in Tanggu, Tianjin," said Guo Xusheng, a bureau spokesman. "If family members of the deceased don't want to attend, funeral-home workers can help them to scatter the ashes."

The government is stepping up efforts to get residents on board its

scattering program to prevent the development of more real estate for the dead.

Dependents who elect to scatter ashes will be given a 2,000 yuan subsidy, the bureau said.

Promoting cremation has been an uphill battle in a country with deep-rooted traditions of internment. Since the 1990s, the city has erected 30 memorial parks to cope with ash disposal, but a rapidly aging population is pushing the limits of these memorial parks.

"About 70,000 people die every year in Beijing. If the cemeteries expand, the dead will encroach on the living's space," Guo said.

To keep burial practices green, the government has been pushing memorial parks to provide biodegradable urns for less

than 100 yuan.

It also stepped in to reign in the price of funeral and cremation services at Babaoshan Funeral Parlor and Dongjiao Funeral Parlor.

The funeral service, which includes transporting the remains, mortuary makeup, a farewell ceremony, cremation and one year of ash storage costs 1,000 yuan.

Ash burial services which also have several environmentally-friendly options, including tree, lawn or flower planting, and cost 10,000 yuan.

Babaoshan Funeral Parlor offers virtual cemetery plots to relatives of the deceased through its website babaoshan.com.cn. It allows users to upload pictures, stories and commemorative articles. Visitors can present flowers, order



The government is encouraging the scattering of ashes at sea. C Photo

music or toast the deceased online.

To book an ash scattering trip or ask about options, call the bureau at 96156.

The number of people who visit the two municipal funeral homes is

expected to increase 10 percent to 2.5 million this year.

Based on past years, Guo said he expects the peak time for memorial visitations to be March 27 and 28, and April 3 and 4.

No laws can force HP to recall bad laptops



Some HP laptop users protesting for compensation in front of the HP office in Hangzhou.

IC Photo

By Chu Meng

US computer giant Hewlett-Packard (HP) issued an overdue apology to consumers and extended the warranty for some of its laptops Tuesday.

The faulty products and bad after-sale service were exposed on a Monday edition of CCTV's 315 Consumers' Show.

At Tuesday's press conference, an HP spokesman offered a 10-minute apology and two-year extended warranty, but did not offer to recall defective units or offer compensation.

HP Vice President Zhang Yongli said that since the incident, several departments within HP have been working on a solution.

"HP attaches great importance to its users' trust and will abide by state regulations," Zhang said, calling on consumers to not lose faith.

"I called my after-sale service chain store this morning. There is no compensation or preventative maintenance being offered so far," Chu Shuangjian, a local HP owner, said.

Chu purchased a Compaq Presario laptop in 2007. The screen blacked only five months after purchase: it happened again two weeks after being repaired.

He has already spent 1,800 yuan having his laptop repaired.

A staff member at an HP after-sale chain store in Wanda Business Center who refused to be named said "most of HP's maintenance chain stores are franchised. Profits from franchises are separate from the parent company. If HP recalls its laptops, the franchises will be left to eat the costs."

More than 500 laptop users have contacted lawyers claiming their computers were flawed. Some are requesting a recall.

Government quality investigators are looking into the complaints. The General Administration for Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine said it was investigating complaints filed by 60 people that some types of HP computers were defective.

In the next 30 days, HP will address a series of improvement plans to strengthen internal staff training and establish a customer-service tracking system.

"The arrogant attitude of Global top 500 enterprises in China is only possible because of the weak competition they get from their Chinese counterparts. If one day our manufacturing industry goes global, these multinationals will have to change their treatment of the China market," Xiao Chen, a professor from the Global Economy and Trade department under the School of Economics at Peking University, said.

The country has no laws or regulations to force the recall of goods except for automobiles, foodstuffs and medicine. HP knows this, so any recall requests will fall of deaf ears, he said.

"Multinational enterprises use different marketing schemes in different countries. In China, they sell products at a lower price: consequently, their after-sale service suffers," Xiao said.

Zoo closed after starving its tigers to death

By Han Manman

A zoo in Shenyang closed Wednesday after several of its Siberian tigers died of starvation. It has been accused of poaching its own animals to supply blackmarket brewers of tiger-bone tonics.

Forestry authorities are investigating the private Shenyang Forest Wildlife zoo in Liaoning Province to see if any abuses or infractions were involved in the deaths of 11 tigers the last few weeks.

They are still struggling to save three gravely ill Siberian tigers among the zoo's remaining 30.

The deaths were the latest in a series of zoo tragedies. Last November, two hungry tigers mauled a keeper at the same zoo; police shot and killed the animals.

The central government is planning a new national regulation that would force private zoos to properly care for their animals. The Shenyang zoo would be held accountable if the current investigation uncovers any malfeasance.

"We are closely following the development of the incidents," said Liu Xiongying, a senior official with the State Forestry Administration's information office.

"If such bad practices are happening on

a large scale, the administration will pass nationwide measures to stamp it out."

The Shenyang city government holds a 15 percent stake in the zoo. The government allocated 7 million yuan on Sunday to rescue the remaining animals.

There are more than 30 wildlife zoos in China, some of which were set up by local governments with private investment.

The first private zoo opened in Shenzhen in 1993. More quickly followed, but financial problems caused them to quickly deteriorate. Guo Geng, vice director of Beijing Biodiversity Research Center, said 90 percent of the country's private zoos are poorly managed.

"It's hard for private zoos to keep a balance between revenue and animal protection," Guo said. The more private capital the zoos have, the more they fall apart, he said.

In an unscrupulous bid to increase revenue, some zoos release animals that are natural enemies into cages to entertain visitors with gory death matches. Some train their animals to perform stunts. Those most financially-strapped leave them to starve, he said.

Media exposed a private zoo in Hubei province that starved eight of its 11 lions to death after being mired in financial difficulties in 2005. The daily cost of feeding all its



Many private zoos are poorly managed. To profit, zoo owners use their animals in creative or cruel ways to entertain visitors.

IC Photo

other animals was 200 yuan combined – the same amount needed to sustain one lion.

"The horrible actions of the Shenyang zoo are not an isolated incident," said Hua Ning, project manager of the China Office of US-based International Fund for Animal Welfare.

"These tigers died because of a widespread, long-running tradition of cruel treatment at China's private zoos," she said.

The incident was a wake-up call to legislators on the need for a law on animal abuse, she said. "Without legal punishment, these cruel actions will continue."

Organ trafficker charged with running 'illegal business'

By Han Manman

A man who sold part of his own liver has been arraigned on charges of running an "illegal business" after arranging numerous organ transplants on the black market.

Liu Yu, 26, allegedly started the business after selling 60 percent of his liver in December 2008. He sold each section of his liver for 45,000 yuan, a Haidian District prosecutor announced in a press release Tuesday.

After learning how the organ-donation system worked, Liu allegedly decided to take advantage of it.

He sought organ suppliers and buyers via online messaging and invited at least two other colleagues to join his business in Beijing.

Donors were brought to Beijing and provided food and lodging in the run up to the surgery.

In May 2009, Yang Nian, a 19-year-old man from Hubei Province, sold 60 percent of his liver to a Beijing patient who paid 150,000 yuan to Liu Yu.

Liu allegedly promised to pay Yang 35,000 yuan: Yang received only 20,000 yuan.

Qiu Zhiying, prosecuting attorney at the Haidian Procuratorate, said Liu's formal charge is operating an illegal business.

The trial, which might begin in April, is the country's first on human-organ trafficking," Qiu said.

"It seems like a fair deal; the patient got the liver and survived and Yang made money. But Liu's behavior deserves to be punished because he damaged social order and went against basic ethics," Qiu said.

Qiu said Liu may be sentenced to five years in prison.

According to national laws regulating organ transplants, donors and recipients must be spouse or blood relatives. Hospitals check ID cards and require a notarized document declaring the recipient to be a spouse or blood relative. Liu made fake ID cards and notarized documents using counterfeit stamps, Qiu said.

China has been doing organ transplants for 20 years, and is the world's second-largest performer of the surgery after the US with about 5,000 operations a year.

Most organs are donated after death following the signing of a donation agreement.

However, there is an immense gap between the demand for functional organs and donations.

About 1.5 million patients need organ transplants each year, but only 10,000 find suitable organs, the Ministry of Health said.

The imbalance has led to a thriving black market for human parts.

"A considerable number [of transplants] were done with fake identities from hired donors," said vice health minister Huang Jiefu, a leading liver transplant expert.

"Without intervention, China will become the biggest black market for human organs, which will seriously affect the country's reputation and threaten patients' health," he said.

Students return to seek dreams, fortune as entrepreneurs

By Annie Wei

Aaron Du has had a rough week, and now he's taking it out on the treadmill. Sleep has been rare as his new startup prepares for the launch of 24quan.com, a website that offers daily discounts on restaurants and spas like the US sitegroupon.com.

He is one of hundreds, born in the 1980s, returning to the country try his hand at business. Du, 26, has been passionate about starting his own company ever since his days at Harvard Business School.

But times have changed since these new entrepreneurs left Chinese high schools to pursue degrees and English skills abroad.

Unlike 10 years ago, returning from abroad no longer guarantees a head start in the race for entrepreneurial success.

Aaron Du and his 24quan.com
Photos provided by 24quan.com

Dreams of start-ups

Back in Beijing, Du founded a small office in Zhongguancun, Haidian District, which offers the best tax breaks to IT companies.

But he quickly learned he wasn't the only one with this idea: two or three local companies were already doing the same thing.

Building 24quan.com was an uphill battle. Returning students not only had no advantage, but the ones who never left had better local resources and connections.

Since 1998, Tsinghua University has held an annual student entrepreneurship competition.

Five years later, as enrollment swelled at schools around the country, the government announced a new plan to encourage 2 million undergraduates to explore entrepreneurship.

Last year, the Global Social Venture Competition (GSVC) China, an annual competition to help connect enterprising students with capital, held its first session in Beijing.

"We received 100 business proposals," said Zhang Renhe, GSVC China executive chair from Peking University. Most of those proposals came from current students, but past graduates also returned to participate.

"Entrepreneurship has been a popular topic the last few years, especially since 2007," Zhang said.

The reason may be linked to media coverage of the economic crash, which encouraged many people to start their own businesses as an alternate path to success.

With jobs evaporating overseas and the boom in global finance over, China is still a land of opportunity – even if its economy is slowing.

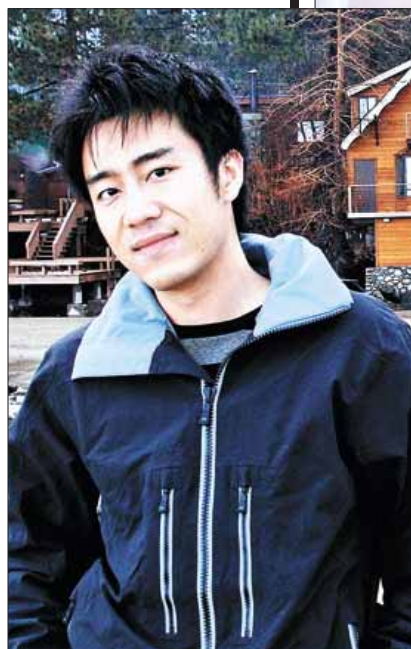
Among the 100 proposals Zhang reviewed, she found that those submitted by people who were returning from overseas were always inferior.

"The problem is they don't understand the local market since they have been out of it for so long," Zhang said.

The phenomenon is not limited to proposals; most of the successful enterprises have all been homegrown, Zhang said.

One example is guolai.com, which offers recruitment training to college students and campus recruiting services.

The company, founded two years ago, claimed to turn a profit in the second half of 2009. It is now ranked as one of the top five job sites.



Li Meizi and her sosodada.com, which offers free printing in campus and neighborhoods

Photos provided by Sosodada.com

'Returning Chinese' advantage

Zhang Youming, one of the founders, said it's common that people returning from overseas fail to find success in the IT industry.

But while they may not know the market, they do have other advantages.

"Returning Chinese have the advantages of youth, access to international resources and global vision," said Lu Wei, 32, a local investor who made his money in the steel industry.

In getting venture capital, a proposal by a Stanford graduate is more likely to attract cash than a proposal by a local, he said.

That was certainly true for Li Meizi, CEO of sosodada.com.

"If you dream of being an entrepreneur in China, you should just come back and do it," Li said.

Her company provides free single-sided printing services to campuses and nearby communities. The reverse side of the prints contains advertisements for nearby vendors.

When she was growing up, Li's family ran their own printing business. She left for the US to attend Stanford in 2005.

After returning to Beijing, she found most of her acquaintances and alumni were working in banking, consulting or the Internet. Sosodada combined her family's printing resources with media, advertising and the Internet in an environmentally-friendly business model.

Her company has 10 employees and prints at five universities, including Peking University and Renmin University. The service will soon be available at convenience stores in several neighborhoods.

Leo Chen started his second company before he was 26.

Photo provided by Reemake

China, big chances

The early years for any start-up are years of trial and error. Resilience is the key to success as an entrepreneur, said Leo Chen, 26.

Being passionate and confident helped him build a gaming company after he graduated from Stanford. He has since sold it.

After 10 years abroad, Chen came home because of his emotional ties to home.

Like Aaron Du and Li Meizi, Chen said it's easier for a company to make money in the US because of its better business environment.

But with a huge population and dynamic economy, China too has many opportunities for the new generation of entrepreneurs.

"In the Internet and mobile communications industries, there are tons of opportunities," Chen said.

Chen's new company Reemake is an Internet advertiser that specializes in helping gaming companies to attract new users.

"I just love living as an entrepreneur and the great feeling of growing my company from scratch," he said.

Chinese women bound for space

"Women hold up half the sky," according to an old proverb popularized by former Chairman Mao Zedong.

Now it looks like women will be doing the same thing in space.

National space program selects first female astronauts

The national space program's first two female astronauts have been selected and may take part in missions to China's planned space station, Xinhua reported.

They are, of course, in peak physical condition, with the flying skills required of any air force ace. But the women face an extra challenge: they need to be mothers to qualify for the country's prestigious space program.

"We had almost the same requirements for women candidates as for the men, but the only difference was that they must be married, as we believe married women would be more physically and psychologically mature," Zhang Jianqi, a former commander of the country's manned space program, said.

Officials have yet to disclose the names of the would-be astronauts, but all are between the ages of 27 and 34. Hong Kong's *Wen Wei Po* newspaper identified five of the 15 women shortlisted and said all were from Shandong Province.

Sun Jing is described as a "flying maniac," while Xing Lei was the only straight-A student in pilot school. Cao Yanyan comes from a high-flying family: both her husband and mother-in-law are said to be outstanding pilots.

Liu Lu is multi-talented and a lover of literature, while Wang Yaping helped with recovery efforts after the Sichuan earthquake in 2008 and seeded clouds to ensure clear skies for the Beijing Olympics.

Qi Faren, a delegate to the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), told Chinese media that one or two women were currently receiving training for the space program, but that no timetable had been set for the launch. They face up to five years of intensive training.

Would-be astronauts are vetted so carefully that even bad breath can scupper their chances, a medical adviser revealed last year. Many of those who make the grade and undertake the grueling training program never actually make it into space.

Valentina Tereshkova, from the then USSR, became the first woman in space in 1963. The US's National



Two female astronauts will be chosen from the first batch of Chinese women qualified to fly fighter jets.

CFP Photo

Expert

Why women are better astronauts than men

If space scientists had known better at the time of the Apollo 11 moon landing in July 1969, the mission's defining legacy might have read "one small step for a woman, one giant leap for womankind."

New medical research has revealed that the mental and physical characteristics of women mean they are far better suited to long-term space travel than men.

William Rowe, a professor of medicine at the Medical College of Ohio has published new research in the journal *Men's Health and Gender*, which focused on the hormonal and physical make-up of women under age 30, and concludes that they are far better

suited to long-term, long-distance travel than men.

In particular, men in their 30s and 40s are much more likely to develop the first signs of heart disease, a condition exacerbated by space travel. Women are protected from this by their comparatively high levels of estrogen.

Drug treatments during space flight are not recommended because they are not readily absorbed in weightless conditions; the liver and the kidneys do not function at their best and the drug compounds deteriorate more quickly because of the higher levels of radiation in space.

Men are also disadvantaged because they retain much higher

levels of iron in the body than women, particularly in space, and this can reach toxic levels. Women's reduced body mass, which requires fewer calories and produces less waste, also makes them yet more suitable as long-term astronauts.

But there is one drawback to having an all-female crew, said Rowe. They should avoid space walks during menstruation because of the increased risk of decompression sickness resulting from lower total blood volume.

Regardless of that risk, however, Rowe remained adamant that women would be much better placed than men in the space.

(Agencies)



2010年3月18日

BQ隆重推出白皮书
第四季《红楼·白日·梦》

Google fails in China

Leave for certain

Google is now "99.9 percent" certain to leave and shut its Chinese search engine Google.cn, the *Financial Times* reported last Friday.

The report, citing a company insider, said Google's talks with the Chinese government over censorship have reached an "apparent impasse," and that the company had drawn up detailed plans for closing its Chinese search engine. Some of the plans include protection for local employees, who may become victims of retaliation by authorities.

The government's stance was vague when Premier Wen Jiabao indirectly commented last Sunday that China will become a "fair playing ground" for foreign investors and will grant foreign enterprises "national treatment."

Without giving a clear mention of Google, Wen said China welcomed foreign investors to conduct business in line with Chinese law.

On Friday, China's top Internet regulator said Google might have to bear the consequences for breaching rules.

The government's latest response came after Li Yizhong, head of the Information Technology Ministry, warned Google it would face consequences for breaching any rules as it "insists in doing what violates China's laws and regulations, and it is up to the company to leave China or not."

Google had not released a statement in response. But Wang Jinhong, a Beijing-based spokeswoman for Google, was quoted by local *Global Times* as saying that Google China's business was still operating.

She denied media reports that Google employees will resign in droves when they get the company's year-end bonus on March 28.

Talk of Google withdrawing from China eased in February

Market, not policy, the motivator of great exit

By Huang Daohen

This time it's almost certain: Google will leave China, the *Financial Times* reported.

More reports emerged during this week that made the Internet giant's exit plans even sounder.

While pundits scrambled desperately to spin the story with political overtones, many believe the real motivation is far simpler: Google is not successful in China.

after it reportedly started hiring employees at its Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou offices.

In January, a battle over the filtering of sensitive search results led to Google saying it would quit China in response to "highly sophisticated cyber attacks."

Letter from China partners

Though up in the air, Google's move has worried its China partners. A group of 27 Chinese advertising agencies sent Google a letter calling for talks over compensation for possible business losses if it leaves.

The letter, confirmed Wednesday by Google and one of the agencies, complained that Google has kept them in the dark about whether it plans to leave China.

The 27 advertising resellers said Google has not spoken to them since it said in January it was considering pulling the plug on Google.cn.

A copy of the letter was posted on the website of China Central Television (CCTV).

"The only thing we can do is to wait – in unbearable agony and anxiety," the agencies said in the letter. "If Google tells us now that we, our clients, employees and investors, have to bear the commercial risks of their business move... we absolutely cannot accept it!" they said. (Agencies)

Expert

Just a matter of unsuccessful market behavior

It is increasingly difficult to believe Western media claims that Google is leaving because of censorship, Zhao Xiao, an economics professor with the University of Science and Technology Beijing, said.

Zhao said the reason was clear: Google failed to take a share of the China market.

"As a company, Google is simply not that successful in China," he said.

News of Google's leaving was a shock to world media groups, Zhao said. "Western media wasted no time to pounce on China for censorship and praise Google. That is hardly a shock when you look at what they do with other China news."

First of all, Google is a company and its business comes first: if it did not, it would be delinquent to its shareholders. Google has always placed great importance on securing a foothold in the China market, Zhao said.

"It would have been condemned if it ignored the Chinese market, which has almost 400 million Internet users and is still brimming with potential," he said.

Google's China strategy began in 2005 when it risked lawsuits to snatch Lee Kaifu from Microsoft. Google.cn was launched as soon as it acquired Lee as CEO.

"The problem is Google.cn simply cannot compete with its main domestic rival, Baidu.com," Zhao said. Official statistics show that as of last September, Baidu's market share in China reached 77.2 percent while Google.cn only took 12.7 percent.

In fact, the majority of Google's users in China use Google.com as their first choice – not the Chinese site, Zhao said.

Five years have passed, and despite enormous investment in Google.cn, the attempt was a failure, he said. Lee's abrupt departure last September made the situation even worse.

In light of its obligations to shareholders and investors, Google's move is no surprise, Zhao said. "China's censorship, as a matter of fact, is just the Google management's ingenious excuse to exit a market where the company failed its investors," he said.

Referring to claims that a shutdown of Google.cn will leave Chinese netizens isolated from the outside world, Zhao said it is untrue.

"The closure has little, if any, effect on Chinese users, as [domestic Google users] prefer Google.com for their search channel," he said.

After years spent researching the performance of foreign companies in China, Zhao said he discovered an interesting phenomenon: when a company fails and needs to escape, the government and its policies invariably become the scapegoats.

China savior for Bordeaux wine

By Huang Daohen

China has ousted the US as Bordeaux's biggest client outside of Europe, according to recent statistics.

Overall exports of wine from the region declined 23 percent in 2009, forcing local vintners to look East, especially to emerging markets like China, Le Conseil Interprofessionnel du Vin de Bordeaux (CIVB) said.

"China has become our number one client outside the European Union," Alain Vironneau, president of the CIVB, said at a recent press conference.

Vironneau hailed the China market as a savior as France's wine region struggles to survive the economic crisis.

"Several hundred vineyards are in peril due to insufficient cash," Vironneau was quoted by AFP as saying. Despite a slight increase in export sales over the past months, Vironneau said 2009 was catastrophic for Bordeaux.

In 2009, Bordeaux exported 206 million bottles – a 14 percent drop in volume and a 23 percent drop in value. But sales to China grew 40 percent to 695 million yuan while volume increased an impressive 97 percent, the CIVB said.

Grape wine consumption has not traditionally been popular in China. For years, Bordeaux merchants criss-crossed the country without a payoff.

"The wine boom in China started three years ago and grows each year at an impressive rate," local wine merchant Han Xiaomin said.

Han, once a manager for a trading company, is a fan of grape wine. He has spent more than 100,000 yuan stocking his cellar. Two years ago, he opened his own wine shop.

Han said his Chinese consumers fall into two groups: those buying for themselves or as gifts. "The people who are buying for themselves are those who lived abroad and are looking for a classier life," he said.

Many also recognize that moderate wine consumption is good for the health. "Wine can help resist the aging process because it contains tannins, especially red wine," Han said.

Han said nowadays, most wine exported to China is at the lower end of the price range. "The better quality brands have not seen big increases," he said.

But Han takes it as a positive sign for the future. "Eventually people will want better quality."



In a file picture taken on January 14, the national flag flies over the Google logo outside the company's Beijing headquarters in Beijing. ICPhoto

Art no matter what

Is society responsible for supporting its artists financially?

By Zhao Hongyi

The room of "elite poet" He Lu in Songzhuang Village is extremely cold, almost the same temperature as outside where snow is falling.

The 55-year-old insists on living with the barest of necessities while writing poetry, even after a grave illness that almost killed him a year ago.

He Lu hails from Chongqing where he used to be a newspaper journalist, and later, the owner of a hot-pot restaurant.

He came to Beijing in 1993 on a trip to visit a migrant artists' community near Yuanmingyuan, the Old Summer Palace. The presence of a large group of migrant artists – painters, poets and theater performers – in the capital encouraged him to stay on and start writing poems.

At the beginning of the 21st century, He, together with many other "floating artists" in Beijing, moved to the newly constructed Songzhuang Village. He found a small house that he and a fellow artist rented for 130 yuan a month.

"He is a productive poet with hundreds of poems," Hu Yuepeng, a painter and He's neighbor, said. "He has also written a novel based on the Yuanmingyuan community." Hu forgot to say that He also composes songs.

He Lu's works can rarely be found online, likely because he never learned to use the computer. His poems and stories are scribbled on loose pieces of paper.

Last year, with the help of an artist friend, the poet published *Works of He Lu*. The book sold several hundred copies, but it earned He only several thousands yuan.

On February 14, 2009, during Spring Festival, a friend visited He's home and found him near death. He was taken to a nearby hospital, where doctors discovered he had been sick for weeks yet did not seek treatment.

The Songzhuang Artists' Association, a non-government organization, solicited donations on He's behalf. The effort raised 90,000 yuan.

Brilliant, starving artists are a common theme in Songzhuang. How to help them create a better life is a question that many concern citizens are asking.

Comment

Artists need social security

Many artists throughout the country live in areas like Songzhuang Village, and their number is increasing. The income for producing art cannot meet the basic cost of living. Except for a few lazy individuals, most of these artists need social security so that they can continue creating.

– Wang Hong, artist in Songzhuang Village

Society's shame

He Lu's misery is a source of collective shame. An individual has played his social role to the full as long as he obeys the law, ethical standards and official orders. We should provide at least basic social welfare to such individuals. Society cannot afford to lose a poet. We need

to rethink our current system.

– zhiweiniABC, netizen from Zhejiang

People at the margins

Most of the artists in the village live in abject poverty. He Lu's case reflects a common condition among these elite, progressive artists who live on the fringe of society.

– Hu Yuepeng, painter in Songzhuang Village

Support artists

An artist cannot produce exceptional work if he cannot have a bowl of rice. We should support artists rather than leave their fate to commercial success. He Lu's case shows that idealism only masks reality.

– yehan19870726, netizen in Hangzhou

Background

Situation of 'floating' migrant artists

The number of migrant artists in Beijing and other big cities is on the rise. They produce paintings, write novels and poems, do theater arts – either for money, to ponder society or to find an outlet from the pressures of life.

On February 21, Zhang Qi, a poet born in the 1980s, ran advertisements online to search for a rich woman to be his benefactor. For the price of 1.2 million yuan a year, Zhang offered "romance from the heart of a real poet" and "psychological massage" to ease life's burdens.

"I don't like to keep running up against the worry of what to have for my next meal while writing poems," Zhang said online. "It's the best way to realize my dream of

writing literature."

There are stories of artists making it big after they abandoned their dream.

Wo Fu, a native of Heilongjiang Province and a friend of He Lu's, came to Beijing in the '90s. He started a literary magazine, but closed it after a month and moved to the artists' community in Yuanmingyuan.

Two years later, Wo gave up his big literary dreams after realizing that earning a living should come first. Wo is now a successful businessman.

After learning of He's story, Wo shook his head. "Ninety percent of us gave up our dreams and that misery in 1992. Why does he persist?"

Fans fear Yao's daughter will be American

By Chu Meng

Yao Ming, the country's most successful NBA player, can do no wrong on the court in the eyes of basketball fans. But some are crying foul over the possibility that his first born would take on US citizenship.

Yao is a towering 2.25 meters, while his wife Ye Li, a former basketball player, is 1.9 meters tall. Scientists predict that their soon-to-be-born daughter will shoot up to 1.86 meters and will possess the ideal skills for sports, particularly basketball.

If the baby is born in the US, where the couple resides, she will automatically become an American citizen according to US law – unless Yao elects Chinese citizenship for her as the child of Chinese nationals. Chinese law does not recognize dual citizenship.

Some Chinese fans say that Yao's decision can make or break a future basketball superstar for China.

Last Saturday, CCTV-5, the state broadcaster's sports channel, quoted Yao's agent Zhang Mingji as saying that the intended place of birth for the child was a family matter and not up for debate.

Yao Ming echoed the line in TV interviews. "This is a private matter for the family," he said.

Comment

Not a political tool

Yao Ming is an individual, not a political tool. He has the right to choose where his child will be born and what kind of medical care and education will be available to her. His child's citizenship has nothing to do with loyalty.

– netizen on

Hoopchina.com

A loss for China

This is not about "narrow patriotism"; we are not narrow-minded. The fact is, this will not only be a huge loss to Chinese basketball but, as far as feelings are concerned, something very difficult for Chinese fans to accept.

– Liu Zizhong, basketball fan

No right to interfere

We have no right to interfere in the future of baby Yao. When baby Yao grows up, she will have the right to choose her own nationality and occupation.

– Kekeweigi, Canadian expat

Change nationality at 18

Absolutely, more opportunities will open for the girl if she is a US citizen. It will be easier for her to travel, she can go to school in the US or work and live there if she wants. But I'm sure she will still choose Chinese citizenship when she turns 18.

– Guo Rouxi, office worker



He Lu insists on living with the barest of necessities while writing poetry.

Photo provided by China Youth Daily

Chinese characters muse of Dutch pop artist



Woody van Amen and his wife Cocky on Fragrant Hills on the eastern outskirts of Beijing.

Photos by Li Na

By Chu Meng

Dutch pop artist Woody van Amen reinterprets Chinese characters in a colorful, Western style in a solo exhibition at C-Space gallery, Caochangdi art zone, which runs until April 10.

"Why is the Chinese script so fascinating? It consists of what we call ideograms. When you come to understand them, you'll realize there's a certain logic to them," van Amen, 74, said.

Dressed in a plain brown suit, with a neatly trimmed mustache, the artist could have been mistaken for a university professor.

Christened by Western media as "the Father of Dutch Pop Art," van Amen became fascinated with Chinese characters after he was diagnosed with cancer in 2003. The shocking news came just after the publication of *Woody Van Amen: Crossing Worlds*, a retrospective album of his 30 years as an artist.

"The time in the hospital altered my thinking," he said. "I was suddenly attracted to the vertical and horizontal lines of the characters and the meaning behind them ... and the first series of works I did in my 'second life' was square-shaped Chinese characters."

The first one that drew his attention was *shuangxi* or "double happiness," two characters for "happiness" standing side by side forming one unit – often associated with weddings. Recreated using photographs and neon paint, the character takes center stage in Van Amen's Beijing exhibition.

He reinterprets characters by combining them with a Western image, which he associates with the Chinese script. Double happiness, for instance, he juxtaposes with the Matterhorn, one of the best-known mountains in the Alps, on the border of Italy

and Switzerland.

"It was my personal symbol of Western happiness," van Amen said.

Experiences in daily life have always been the main theme of the Dutchman's work. His subjects are ordinary, everyday objects that he fuses with symbols to give them new life and relevance. Over the decades, his style has become intense, filled with deepening layers of meaning.

It was in New York in 1961 that he became acquainted with the work of Andy Warhol and Robert Rauschenberg, pioneering figures in



Woody van Amen's interpretation of the character jin, or gold.

American Pop Art that would influence his work. But by that time, he had also already begun developing his own "experimental" style after years of working in Rotterdam.

He came to Beijing during his first Asian trip after leaving the hospital. His first stop on the tour was Singapore, where he came upon flashcards of Chinese characters in the city-state's Chinatown. He remembers his eyes being drawn to the character for square, *fang*.

"I frequently use 'square' in my work. Chinese characters are incredibly beautiful – like a ballerina," he said.

But it is not only written Chinese that fascinates van Amen. His two daughters both live and work in Shanghai and speak the language well. They were in C-Space for the opening of their father's exhibition last Saturday and spoke to the audience in Chinese.

"So, what do you think of my daughters' Chinese? Good enough?" he whispered to this reporter.

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Exhibit shows female talent, strength

By Chu Meng

"Women's Rooms," an exhibition of a century of artwork by top Finnish female artists and which centers on female culture, social experience and nature appreciation, opened at the National Art Museum of China Wednesday.

The works, which are on loan from the Finnish National Gallery, consist of 72 pieces created by 15 artists between 1870 and 1990. Many depict the human form and the Finnish natural environment.

"Nature has always been an important source of strength and leisure for the Finns. This is certainly something that the Finnish and Chinese people have in common," Lars Backstrom, Finland's ambassador, said.

Maija Tanninen-Mattila, director of the Finnish National Gallery's Ateneum Art Museum, said the exhibition aims to help

promote the exceptional work of female artists and generate more discussion about them.

"Throughout history, most of the beautiful and famous women's portraits were made by male artists. Few knew what the world, human beings and nature looked like in the eyes of female artists," she said.

She said the art scene in Finland began to develop rapidly in 1846 with the founding of the Finnish Art Society. Since then, art education became available to both men and women; this would not happen in other countries until after the turn of the century.

"Particularly in upper class families, it was common practice for the daughters to get basic training in the arts. This created the basis for the strong position of women in Finnish art today. The number of paintings from female artists in



Ambassador Lars Backstrom is giving an opening speech at the Women's Room exhibition.

Photo by Chu Meng

Ateneum Art Museum makes up to 40 percent of our whole collection," Tanninen-Mattila said.

The painting *Self-Portrait* is an exhibition icon. Created by Elin Danielson-Gambogi, one of the country's most successful female artists who was born in 1861, it reflects the self-confidence Finnish female artists had achieved by the mid- to late-19th century.

Danielson-Gambogi portrays herself under a soft light, filtered through a thin piece of fabric, and she engages the viewer with a calm self-assurance while holding the artist's trademark equipment: brushes and a palette.

"Women's Room" was organized by the Chinese Ministry of Culture and the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the establishment of bilateral relations between China and Finland.

ILO strengthens prevention of migrant worker trafficking

By Li Zhixin

Most cases of human trafficking in the country occur because of the growing number of rural residents wanting to work in the city, the International Labor Organization (ILO) said Thursday during the launch of the second phase of its Project to Prevent Trafficking for Labor Exploitation in China.

The three-year-long project, co-sponsored by the All-China Women's Federation, aims to thwart trafficking and other kinds

of abuse against migrant workers. Efforts are focused on the home provinces of many migrant workers - Anhui, Hunan, Guizhou, Sichuan and Yunnan - and those that receive them: Fujian, Guangdong and Jiangsu.

A growing proportion of the country's 150 million migrant workers are young women and children who have dropped out of school due to poverty. Each year, tens of millions of girls and young women move to cities in search of work.

"They often have little awareness of the risks involved in living and working in a city, such as being sexually exploited or abused in the workplace or being duped by traffickers who force them to work for little or no pay," Ann Herbert, director of the ILO for China, said during the ceremony Thursday.

"Prevention is the most sustainable long-term solution for trafficking," she said.

For the ILO, this means imple-

menting inter-provincial arrangements for safe migration, educating vulnerable youth about their rights as workers and equipping them with basic life skills before they migrate.

The plans also involves establishing peer-to-peer support networks and working with employers and workers' associations to protect the rights of migrant workers.

"Poverty is the root cause of trafficking, but not the only factor.

Other factors include gender preference for boys, strains on education and decent work opportunities, young people leaving home at a young age and the opportunity for unscrupulous employers to exploit their vulnerability," Herbert said.

During the ceremony, the Canadian Embassy on behalf of the Canadian International Development Agency donated 4 million Canadian dollars (27 million yuan) to the project.

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WORKING IN CHINA. START HERE. SINCE 1993

Women's Day celebrated with mentoring opportunities



The charity event aimed to raise funds for female teaching fellows who will work in rural Yunnan schools.

By Liang Meilan

Jo Ling Kent, a CNN associate producer in Beijing, has hosted an annual charity event for International Women's Day since 2006.

This year, the event held March 12 and themed Mentoring Future Women Leaders, aimed to raise 100,000 yuan to support two female teaching fellows with the China Education Initiative (CEI), who will work in rural Yunnan public schools and offer mentorship to local women.

The cocktail party, held at Yishu 8 art gallery, featured keynote speaker CEI President Rachel Wasser, who introduced the group's work in the country. "CEI takes a unique approach to

eliminate educational inequity in China by pairing the US and China's most promising graduates," Wasser said.

She said their US-China Teaching Fellows program "meets the pressing need for exceptional teachers in China's understaffed low-income rural schools, while fostering a constituency of young leaders positioned to advance the cause of educational equity and effect long-term systemic change."

The event's host, Kent, said she was impressed by the CEI and Wasser who have "led an incredible team of Chinese and Americans to help alleviate inequality in education for women and girls."

The affair also auctioned off mentoring opportunities with 10



Jo Ling Kent, the event organizer
Photos by Jeffrey Lau

leaders in their industries, such as Ching Tao, executive director of Goldman Sachs (China). Over an afternoon at restaurants like SALT and Capital M, bidders can discuss career aspirations with their chosen mentor.

The evening also promoted a series of one-on-one mentoring lunches with prominent and successful women and men from diverse professional backgrounds in Beijing.

Kent said she herself is witness to the power of mentoring. "I've been able to achieve my goals with the help of strong women in my life."

Attendees to the charity event included artists, entrepreneurs and women leaders.

Event

Literary Lunch with Lauren Child

Lauren Child, a UNESCO Artist for Peace and one of the UK's top-selling authors best known for writing the Charlie and Lola books and Clarice Bean novels, is in town for the annual Bookworm International Literary Festival. This afternoon, over food and drinks in a cozy art gallery, she will discuss various aspect of her fascinating career.

Where: Yishu 8, 8 Langjiayuan, Jianguo Lu, Chaoyang District

When: March 19, 12:30 pm
Tel: 6581 9058
Cost: 250 yuan

Songwriting workshop with Julie Doiron

Julie Doiron, a Canadian singer and songwriter, is known for her direct, beautifully crafted, painfully honest lyrics, laying bare challenges, triumphs and heartbreaks. In this workshop, Doiron will share the secrets of her craft and provide tips on how to utilize personal experience for brilliant songwriting.

Where: Yishu8, 8 Langjiayuan, Jianguo Lu, Chaoyang District

When: March 19, 3-5 pm
Tel: 6581 9058
Cost: 200 yuan

Columbia Community Outreach Event

The Columbia Alumni Association of Beijing will be hosting a dinner to raise funds for animal welfare in China, particularly to help homeless animals in Beijing. Guest speakers will discuss the current situation, education campaigns conducted by local welfare organizations and what people can do to help.

The event will include cocktails and raffle prizes.

Where: Westin Beijing, Jinmao Ballroom, 7 Dongsanhuan Lu, Chaoyang District

When: March 20, 5-8 pm
Tel: 5922 8888
Cost: 300 yuan

Temple Milonga — Tango ball

Andres Laza Moreno and Isabel Acuna will fly in from Buenos Aires to conduct a two-week workshop on Argentinian Tango at Beijing Tango, the main Argentinian Tango organization in Beijing. Their welcome milonga will take place at the 700-year old Hong'en Temple, featuring live music performed by students from the Central Conservatory of Music.

Where: 4 Zhangwang Hutong, Jiugulou Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: March 20, 8:30 pm — 1 am next day
Tel: 13911201872

Cost: 120 yuan, 80 yuan for students and Beijing Tango members

(By Liang Meilan)

French Festival closes with concert and fashion show

By Zhang Dongya

The annual French Festival will end with a concert and fashion show at Yugong Yishan Saturday.

The fashion show, themed French Culture and the Diversity of the French World, will feature pieces designed and modeled by students of the French Fashion University ESMOD in Beijing.

Four international bands and artists will turn up the sound and energy with electronic music, jazz and hip-hop: Trip In from Switzerland, Samian from Quebec, Al K Traxx from France and Labiur from Belgium.

The four-man band Trip In was started by a saxophonist and a rapper who shared a passion for jazz. Then came their desire to marry the genre with the energy of hip-hop, resulting in jazzy riffs flavored with rhyme.

Al K Traxx's repertoire is a colorful mix of hip-hop, electronic music and rock. The group has played

with popular French band ASSASIN twice in 2009, and released its latest album in January.

Samian, a member of North America's Algonquin aboriginal group, is the first Canadian rapper to perform in both French and Algonquin. His music talks about his experience as an Algonquin in Quebec and encourages dialogue between the Quebecois and Algonquins.

The finale will be given by Labiur, a French-speaking Belgian singer known for her electronic music shows. Last year, the 24-year-old released her debut CD, *BIJUTIFUL*, which combined dance, electronic music, hip-hop and techno.

The 15th French Festival was organized by The French Alliance in Beijing, the embassies of Switzerland, Canada and Belgium (Wallonia-Brussels Delegation in China), as well as the Quebecois offices in China. The Eric Paris Salon for hair



Artists at the March Madness concert and fashion show in Hong Kong

Photo provided by Afbeijing.org

and makeup is a co-sponsor. **March Madness Concert and Fashion Show**

Where: YugongYishan, 3-2 Zhangzizhong Lu, Dongcheng District

When: March 20, 7 pm

Tel: 6404 2711

Cost: Free

Note: Invitations available at the reception desk of the French Alliance office, but seating limited. For more information, visit afbeijing.org.cn or call 6553 2678 ext. 209 (French)

Rental bicycles available at more subway stations

By Zhao Hongyi

More rental bicycles have become available at 50 entrances along subway lines 4 and 10 last Monday through September 15.

People can rent and return bicycles at any of the outlets, said Pan Qiang, business manager at Fortune Bicycle Rental.

"We are not targeting profit at present," Pan said, "but reminding people to be aware of air pollution and that there are better ways of traveling in the downtown."

Fortune has four types of membership cards: the annual

card at 120 yuan, six-month card at 100 yuan, monthly card at 30 yuan and a card with no time limit for 2 yuan per hour. All members need to add a registration fee of 5 yuan and a deposit of 180 yuan, which will be returned when they cancel their membership.

Due to Beijing's increasing volume of cars and decreasing parking spaces, the price of bicycle rental and parking is climbing. Many bicycle parking blocks, a common sight downtown, are fast disappearing because of low demand.

Meanwhile, 4 million cars were registered in Beijing by the end of 2009, which translated into more serious air pollution and traffic jams.

To counter these problems, the municipal government has encouraged the growth of bicycle rental services.

Fortune, established at the start of 2008, operates more than 600 outlets downtown and another 1,400 along the outer ring roads. They have 30,000 bicycle units for rent, mostly in tourist spots and commercial areas.

The municipal government expects to set up 149 additional bicycle rental spots along the two subway lines this year. By 2013, it hopes to increase to 1,000 the number of rental spots at subway stations and transportation hubs, up from the 500 expected in 2012.

Bicycle Rental

Tel: 6500 3999

Bird of Freedom

Tel: 6313 1010

Fortune Bicycle Rental

Tel: 6421 8434

IBike

Tel: 96156

New agency to solve commercial disputes set up in Zhongguancun

By Wang Yu

The People's Court of Haidian District this week created an agency in Zhongguancun to solve disputes that arise in the neighboring electronics shopping malls.

One of the country's largest digital products market districts, Zhongguancun comprises of 13 electronics malls that sell some 8,000 domestic and foreign brands. Disputes between customers and shop owners are a common occurrence. According to the People's Court of Haidian District, it receives more than 300 related cases each year.

Research by the court shows that most of the cases involve "a small amount of money," but that it takes as long as six months to close a case. To promote efficiency, the court together with the Zhongguancun Chamber of Commerce, decided to establish an agency for extrajudicial settlements. It will open offices in



Zhongguancun has become a main shopping area for digital products in northeastern China.

CFP Photo

Zhongguancun's Hailong Building by the end of March.

The Chamber of Commerce chose 15 people to serve as mediators. Qi Bo, vice president of the chamber, said they will either be shopping mall managers or regular employees. All the mediators will receive law training from the court and any

mediator will be taken off a case in which his or her employer is involved, Qi said.

Decisions by the mediation group will be legally binding.

Foreigners will be required to submit documents in Chinese and will shoulder fees for their translation into English. For more information, he

advised foreigners to check relevant clauses in the Civil Procedure Law of The People's Republic of China.

The court suggested customers test a product before they buy it, and they should keep the receipt or the store's promotional material, which will serve as evidence should they decide to sue the seller.

ASK Beijing Today

Email your questions to: weiyi@ynet.com

My mom is taking a flight to Jinan, Shandong Province, for business. But a couple of days ago, she hurt her leg and now has difficulty walking. Can the Capital Airport provide her assistance?

The airport offers assistance to ailing passengers or those with disabilities at all three terminals. Staff members of the service center will accompany and assist the passenger from check-in to boarding. Terminal 3 also provides free wheelchairs for use within the airport. Passengers can make a booking for whatever service they need at the Passenger Service Center on the second floor of Terminal 3. Call the center at 6454 1111 for more information.

I'm planning a trip to Tibet from Beijing and I heard that foreigners have to go through a complicated procedure to get a travel permit. Can you tell me more about it?

The first thing to remember is that foreigners who go to Tibet can only obtain a permit by joining a tour group organized by accredited travel agencies. You need to submit to the travel agency an application form that includes your travel schedule and itinerary, as well as basic information such as your name and passport number. The agency will apply for the travel permit on your behalf, which normally takes 3 working days to process. For more information, call the Tourism Bureau of Tibet Autonomous Region in town at 6593 6538.

(By Liang Meilan)

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By Wang Yu

Seventeen years ago, when Zhang Yuan was filming *Beijing Bastards*, he lived on the fringe.

His latest project, *Unspoiled Brats*, puts the director back behind the camera as '80s children bare their souls for film. Their stories and photos will be part of Zhang's upcoming exhibition and movie.

While the generation gap cannot be closed, it can be bridged. The process began last winter when Zhang opened his ears to the adventure and plight of today's new adults. Going into the project, he expected the kids to have it easy because society today is so much "better" than the one in which he grew up.

And then reality reared its ugly head.

Wang Yunfeng, owner of a motor shop



Zhao Ying, artist



Temple band



Wang Ming, actor



Wang Tianqi, staff in Zhang Yuan's studio



Yang Yu



It is a cold Sunday night in January. The Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA) is closed, but young people still filter into the building in search of the auditorium. Its small entrance at the end of a corridor is masked by a plastic foam door. Early arrivals are seated on a long bench amid studio equipment.

"The emotions are right: you told touching stories. Stay with it when we start shooting," Zhang says to his interviewee, a young man in a blue sport coat and glasses.

Faced with the studio lights and camera, he looks nervous.

The director, his daughter Ning Yuanyuan in tow, greets him. Ning had a major role in her father's *Little Red Flower* when she was 6. She is used to the studio, but for other interviewees the hot lights are a new experience.

All subjects responded online to the director's blog post, in which he called on children of the '80s to come share their stories. The project was born after Zhang's meeting with Jerome Sans, French artist and curator of UCCA, who was interested in Beijing's next generation.

Most young adults are born outside the city and move into the metropolis chasing their dreams. For most, it is not about becoming an artist: they want a better life.

The first round of interviews and photos took the crew a week. Over 300 interviewees were invited. Besides the usual artists and musicians, Zhang also drew on the city's more unusual young residents: a model, a motorcycle shop owner, a genius from a top college and a monk. Photos of 10 of them will be selected for an exhibition at UCCA.

On the last day of Spring Festival, Zhang and his assistants winnow down their pool to 10 candidates. The combined interviews run more than 300,000 words.

"The people [who were] in *Beijing Bastards*, like Cui Jian, settled down years ago. Some of us got money and fame. We are now middle aged. But I'm still very curious about the lives of today's youth who are where we were 17 years before," Zhang says.

He asks his assistant to start the slideshow of photos of Ge Huijie, a model now regularly seen on fashion magazines. The young woman looks sick and tired, with heavy makeup around her eyes. That "punk" style is what attracts her photographers and admirers.

Ge came to Beijing to enter a model school but fell into the pit of online gaming. She broke up with her first boyfriend here and started spending her nights in clubs until a man demanding sex held a knife to her throat. She fell in love with a musician and had a

child, but her online obsessions drove the man away before marriage.

The director says he has learned that not all kids are as spoiled as he thought. Settling down in a big city, with all its opportunities and traps, is as painful as ever.

"Everyone has the desire to tell his story. I think what they have said is true – just a truth that usually ends up buried in this flourishing world," Zhang says.

There is an awful lot to bury. One of the interviewees says he is so depressed that, one time, he laid down in the middle of the road hoping a car would hit him. His car never came.

Wang Ming, a 26-year-old movie producer and actor, squats naked on his heels in his photo. Wang's body is a canvas painted with tattoo. He dropped out of school 14 years ago, and since then worked as a waiter, club singer and lifeguard – during the hardest times he was a smuggler and gangster.

Qin Yuke, an artist and fashion designer, stares down the camera with bandages on his face after a recent face lift. He says he has never been loved by anyone and never had sex. Seeking change, Qin opted for surgery.

"These people are becoming the mainstream. I hope to reveal their situations: they are suffering from new problems that I barely knew about. I went looking for the stories of kids on the edge of society and found out they are a big part of the city's youth. They share a dream the city has yet to smash," Zhang says.

Reality is the most powerful element, the director says, repeating his motto.

"After we finished the first round of shooting, our cameraman, a young man also born in the 1980s, kept rolling. He walked over to the interviewee's chair and floored us all with his own stories," Zhang says.

The movie, which may star the young people in the final photo collection, is being prepared.

Zhang is also planning to tap Nanwu, a local band whose name is taken from a Buddhist sutra. Nanwu's music fuses Chinese folk with rock elements. The band members look more like students than singers, posing as cool in their photos. In his interview, lead singer Liu Xiangsong says he can make the audience laugh and cry with the music – of course, Nanwu is still a nobody in the local music scene.

"Why does every band want to come to Beijing?" Zhang asks. This reporter paused briefly before answering, "It's the center of music."

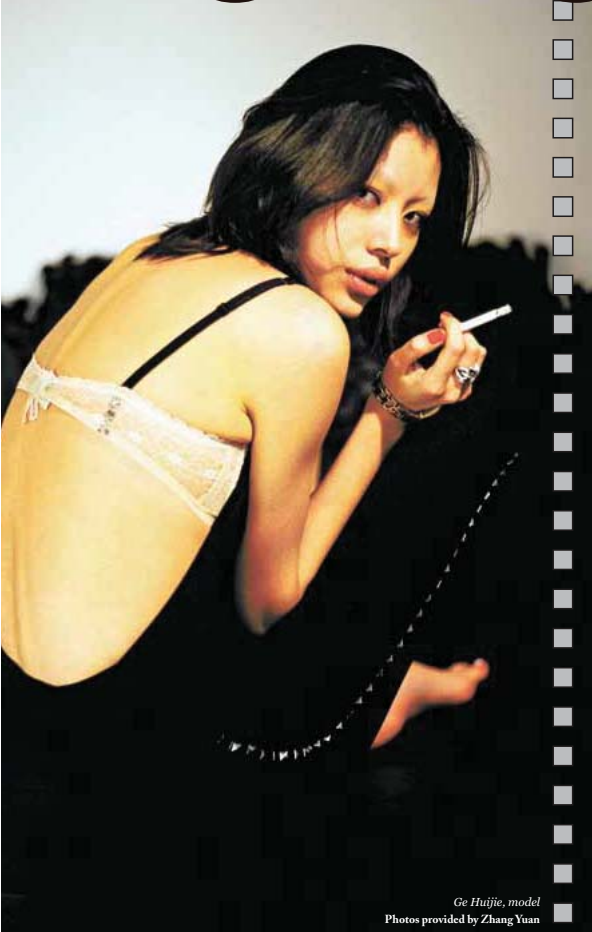
With or without talent, everyone comes looking for an opportunity.

The city is still the same as the one in which Zhang started his dream 20 years ago.

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With on the edge



Ge Huijie, model
Photos provided by Zhang Yuan

people [who were] in Beijing Bastards, Rui Jian, settled down years ago. Some got money and fame. We are now old and aged. But I'm still very curious about lives of today's youth who are where we were 17 years before."



Nanwu band

"Everyone has the desire to tell his story. I think what they have said is true – just a truth that usually ends up buried in this flourishing world."



Shidaoxin, monk

Qin Yuke, artist and fashion designer

Dub poet raps at bookstore

By He Jianwei

Benjamin Zephaniah doesn't recite his poems: he raps them.

Last Saturday afternoon, the British-Jamaican dub poet was reciting lines from his "Who's Who" at One Way Street Bookstore.

Poetry must be performed in public, Zephaniah says. His mission is to fight the dead image of poetry as taught in schools and bring the art back to its everyman roots.



Benjamin Zephaniah raps his poems at One Way Street Bookstore. Photo provided by British Council

The bookstore performance continues for five poems. For the audience, it is impossible not to make a connection between Zephaniah's poems and music – but that may be because of ragtime.

Ragtime music is a major influence on his poems, though he identifies as a rap poet rather than ragtime.

Born in 1958 and raised in the Handsworth district of Birmingham, which he called the "Jamaican capital of Europe," Zephaniah was born into rhythm. "British use the English word while Africans use rhythm in their life. Rhythm seems like their native language," he says.

Zephaniah says even as a baby he was speaking in rhyme: "The first three words I could say were mummy, daddy and money."

At 8 he became determined to become "a poet for the people" like Shakespeare, but his mother discouraged him, saying it was no way to make a living.

"She always answered me, 'Don't indulge in a daydream. Shakespeare died a long time ago,'" he says.

His first performance was in church when he was 10. By the age of 15, his poetry was already known among Handsworth's Afro-Caribbean and Asian communities.

He set off for London at 22 to seek his fortune as a poet having promised

his mother he would make it to television within two years.

"I appeared on television only in one year," he says.

Zephaniah's skill with rap and ballad has made him one of the most popular poets in Britain. He draws on his personal background to discuss domestic and international concerns, like race problems and political issues.

In the Anglosphere, good is white and bad is black. "[Tarzan] happened in the deepest and darkest jungle in Africa, but the hero is a white man," he says, citing the contradiction as his inspiration for the poem "White Comedy."

He fuses personal and political messages in his poems. The first book, *Pen Rhythm*, published in 1980 discussed his life as a bad goth. And his second collection published in 1985, *The Dread Affair*, criticized the country's legal system. In 1990, he made an account of a visit to the Palestinian occupied territories in *Rasta Time in Palestine*.

But Zephaniah would argue those poems were not politics, but an honest response to the times.

In 2003, he turned down induction into the Order of the British Empire by the Queen, stating it reminded him of "how my foremothers were raped and my forefathers brutalized."

Are consumer wines killing the culture?

By Charles Zhu

Winemaking is increasingly attuned to the taste, especially the "fruit bombs," of affluent Americans who are used to soft drinks and hard liquor.

The quest to boost sales has left seasoned connoisseurs lamenting the loss of the terroir that was linked with brand-name wines for centuries.

To understand this controversy between tradition and modernity, between big money and ethics and between globalized taste and uniqueness, look no further than Jonathan Nossiter's *Liquid Memory: Why Wine Matters*. The book gives a glimpse of the challenges traditional brand-name winemakers face and serves a warning that the global trend toward homogeneity is killing wine's value as a special enjoyment in life.

Nossiter is a filmmaker and a former sommelier at upscale New York restaurants and son of the foreign correspondent Bernard Nossiter. He is known for his documentary *Mondovino*, an expose of the wine world that was nominated for a Palme d'Or at the 2004 Cannes Film Festival.

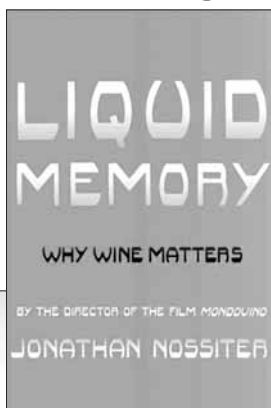
In the book, he castigates critics and consultants, wine dealers, restaurateurs, marketers and wine collectors with Americanized palates.

He believes they are destroying the tradition of terroir, the unique taste wine develops from soil, light, topography and microclimate – it is something one cannot tell, but sense. These wines are made with grapes, like the gamay, which are grown by vignerons in only one place.



On a tour of some of Paris's restaurants and wine shops, he was angry to find at Atelier de Joel Robuchon, a wine with globalized taste, priced at €803 (7,530 yuan). He likened it to Red Lobster, the American seafood chain of mid-level casual diners.

Nossiter takes a classic approach to wine. He says the real treasures lie in Burgundies and Bordeaux of greater status. He writes that a Bordeaux wine is brewed and composed to be like "a hefty novel," while a Bur-



Liquid Memory: Why Wine Matters
By Jonathan Nossiter, 272pp, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, \$15.00

gundy is as lyrical as it is poetic. He fancies wines that are low in alcohol content and high in "wild, exhilarating acidity," wines that are light and aromatic and "provoke an emotion."

The author professes a love of wines that are "fully expressive of a place and its history," such as whites from the Graves in Bordeaux, France. The vineyards are set amidst pine trees. And precisely because of this, he detests the lusciously sweet, fat and overripe wines that have a high alcohol content

and a hint of vanilla. Wines with a floral edge or touch of honey have no sense of place, identity or memory, he says.

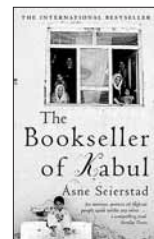
Nossiter is fairly critical of American wine critic Robert Parker, who grades wines on a scale of 50 to 100. His grading helps wine businessmen sell their mass-produced wines at an exorbitant price. Parker gives high scores to sweet, high-alcohol fruit bombs. Nossiter maintains that Parker is one of the chief culprits directing the wine industry toward "sweet and easy things." He criticized Parker for his "nonsensical, frequently ungrammatical" wine-tasting notes and his "blandly kitschy suburban home" adorned with autographed pictures of Ronald Reagan.

Nossiter says the controversy is not a matter of taste.

As if to validate his obsession with terroir, he tours Burgundy in northwest France. Its region most noted for wine growing is the Cote Chalonnaise, a hilly stretch that extends south and slightly east of the southern tip of the Cote d'Or. Its reds are made of pinot noir, its whites of chardonnay: all have the elegance, grace and intensity that wine lovers cherish. In Burgundy, Nossiter shows how a wine is only fine when it has family, history, landscape and vine.

Bookworm book listing

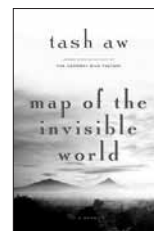
Vivian Wang from the Bookworm recommends the following bestsellers to *Beijing Today* readers.



The Bookseller of Kabul

By Asne Seierstad, 320pp, Back Bay Books, \$13.99

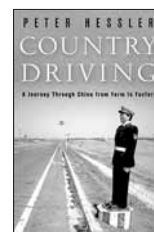
This mesmerizing portrait of a proud man elicited extraordinary praise from world readers and became a phenomenal international bestseller. During three decades of rule by repressive regimes, the bookseller heroically braved persecution to bring books to the people of Kabul.



Map of the Invisible World

By Tash Aw, 336pp, Spiegel & Grau, \$25.00

Adam, 16, and his brother Johan were abandoned by their mother as children – then Adam watched as Johan was adopted by a wealthy couple. Now Adam is in hiding because Karl, the Dutchman who raised him, has been arrested by soldiers during Sukarno's drive to purge 1960s Indonesia of its colonial past.



Country Driving: A Journey Through China from Farm to Factory

By Peter Hessler, 448pp, Harper, \$27.99

Follow Hessler's 7,000-mile trip across north China: from the East China Sea, following the Great Wall, to the Tibetan plateau. Hessler investigates rural regions being abandoned as young people migrate to the southeast. He spends six years in Sancha, a small farming village in the mountains north of Beijing, which changed dramatically after the local road was paved and the capital's auto boom brought new tourism. He lastly turns his attention to urban China, researching two years of development in Lishui, a small city in Zhejiang Province where officials hope a new expressway will transform the farming region into an industrial powerhouse.

(By He Jianwei)

By Wang Yu

When did you drop your blog to start contributing to the line noise that is Twitter and its clones?

The 140-character limit makes microblogging both an instant communication tool and a social media keeping more of us connected to people we've never met.

Some dislike the platform as there are too many Tweets about what someone ate for breakfast. But what if the fad of the year never existed?



Steven Lin, chief designer of Da Code.

A world without microbloggers



No new opportunities for business

When some geeks – mostly engineers, magazine editors and Mac nuts – banded together to start the T-shirt brand Da Code last year, it was a commercial experiment. None had a background in fashion.

Their brand sold 400 T-shirts a month after its establishment and earned 10,000 yuan.

"We invested gradually. Each time we made a limited number, but the shirts sold out very quickly. Our designs, aside from a collaboration with fanfou.com, are all plays on tech and Chinese words rarely seen on T-shirts. That's what makes Da Code different from other T-shirt brands," says Steven Lin, its chief designer.

Lin is known online as "Flypig," one man in the duo that produces Antiwave, an award-winning podcast series with a focus on foreign and Chinese media. He says that the hardest

step was finding somewhere to make the clothes – they had to start from the beginning.

But their efforts in the factory and studio alone are not why they succeeded: they used Twitter.



Da Code was the first company to host a press conference using microblogging only.

"I was stunned by the replies and how many followers we got. We were talking face to face with potential buyers. Just several hours later, more than 10 T-shirts were sold," Michael Zhang, a Da Code member and founder of the Mac blog

apple4.us, wrote in *Esquire*.

"To hold such a conference you have to take it very seriously. Pretend it is a conference in a hall with all the important persons. Then raise the bar for your performance even higher: learn from what Steve Jobs does at Apple's conferences, make a nice speech to start the show," Lin says.

Most buyers shared Da Code's interests in new technology and geek culture. Tapping into that niche was a profitable move.

But what if there is no Twitter?

"Twitter is only one tool. Any time you put all your eggs in one basket you're setting yourself up for a serious crash. Be on Twitter, but don't stop there. Extend your reach and brand as far as it can go," Lisa Barone, chief branding officer of Outspoken Media, writes in her blog.

No microblogging journalism

On February 9, 2009, microblogging broke a story. Even before CCTV, CNN and others mainstream media mobilized, Chinese netizens on Twitter were posting news and information about a fire within the CCTV complex and near the new CCTV building in Beijing.

Similar things happen around the world.

Microblogging played an invaluable role in Bill Daskoch of toronto.ctv.ca breaking the story of a SWAT team swarming the office of a guy whose neighbor had seen him brandishing a handgun. Daskoch heard a gun call that night and tracked tweets until he found the witness.

News companies like the New York Times and CNN are also using Twitter. In China, many

mainstream media groups have registered for Sina's new microblog service.

Why microblogging?

"In a world where legacy media is downsizing and shutting bureaus worldwide, Twitter has become a go-to source of news you can use when and where you want and need it – often when and where the legacy media cannot yet or no longer supplies it. We think that social media is largely comparable to traditional approach, in that credibility is key," Biz Stone, Twitter's co-founder, says.

"I don't think microblogging is the most credible tool. However, what make it useful is its nature that encourages more people to get involved," says Liu Chang, a professor of journalism and communications.



No fandom for President Obama

Though President Obama said he had never used Twitter when asked about his Twitter ID by an audience in Shanghai last November, the account was a wildly successful campaign tool in the run-up to his election in 2008. Since election, the account has been assumed by the Democratic National Committee.

Obama's followers were disappointed to hear the news. But the new president and leader in this Internet era was heavily built up by a handful of tweets.

Andrew Rasiej, co-founder of the nonpartisan political website TechPresident, says politicians' growing awareness of the power of social networks and Internet tools will transform politics the same way that the realization that the

Earth is round transformed the maritime industry.

Wired magazine said microblogging may be most useful as a source of back-channel conversation at live events such as speeches during conventions.

But what about China?

Last month, President Hu Jintao was given heavy media attention for his decision to open a microblog on t.people.com.cn, the People's Daily's online micro-blogging service. The number of registered followers surpassed 12,400 overnight.

One hour later, a blogger named "feiquanmingqin" was recognized as the first follower of President Hu's microblog. The huge number of visitors bogged down the People's Daily's servers.

What if Microsoft made Twitter?

Technology journalists weighed in on this intellectual exercise:

1. An unabridged eBook version of *War and Peace* would pop up as you load the necessary software libraries and security patches to prepare for your first tweet of the day.
2. The terms "Cancer" and "Hippie GPL [GNU Public License] Rubbish" would be emblazoned as watermarks on any tweet about open-source software.
3. Daily software updates would have only two options: "Install" and "Remind Me Later"
4. Attempts to use words such as "bang" or "bong" in tweets would be replaced with "Bing."



Cosme Decorte, 800 yuan

Hydrating your skin for spring

By Li Yiliang

People are more prone to itching and skin allergies in spring than in any other season. One basic rule in skin care is to use mild, hypoallergenic products that suit your skin type. Below are some of our top picks for battling irritable spring skin.

Kiehl's Ultra Facial Toner (250 milliliters, 200 yuan)

Compared to Kiehl's popular Cucumber Herbal Toner, this one looks plain and unimpressive. But don't let first impressions fool you: This gentle, milky formula contains emollients like squalene, apricot kernel oil, avocado oil, and suits all skin types.

This toner can relieve the tightness you feel after washing your face. It also works well with allergy-prone skin.

Avene Hydrance Optimal Rich Protective Hydrating Cream (SPF 20, 208 yuan)

This is not your average moisturizer. This light cream, which also provides UV protection, is specially formulated to fight spring-time skin allergies.

Cosme Decorte Moisture Liposome (800 yuan)

This is a star among facial moisturizers. Try it out if you're looking for a round-the-clock hydrator that leaves skin well-balanced, especially in harsh weather conditions. Its particles are so small that you can even use it before applying toner.

Where: Shin-Kong Plaza, 87 Jianguo Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: 10 am – 10 pm
Tel: 6530 5888



Avene Hydrance Optimal, 208 yuan

Kiehl's Ultra Facial Toner, 200 yuan

Photos by Li Yiliang



Everyone deserves a better life

By Wang Yu

Two young women and two lazy cats are the "owners" of High Art Deco, one of the newest lifestyle shops on the east end Wudaoying Hutong, Dongcheng District, which specializes in home furnishings and equipment.

The shop, located in the middle of the hutong, used to be a tiny room that could only accommodate two adults standing side by side. When Yuan Wei and Gao Fei acquired it to start a business, they expanded the room, which then necessitated imaginative decoration to make it feel homey. Surprise, surprise, the partners ended up dedicating a good portion of the store to decorative products.

Past High Art Deco's wooden door, customers will find a cozy, comfortable little world: furniture in light wood, nice background music, warm lighting.

On the left side of the doorway is a circa-1960 cabinet emblazoned with a socialist slogan. The owners found it at a local flea market, along with the old-fashioned toys and gadgets piled on it. There's a container that serves as a tiny safety deposit box, an electric light that can be attached to a bicycle, a water-based toy.

But the shop's main products are articles for daily use, like chopsticks and a Japanese porcelain bowl.

In the middle of the shop is a blackboard hanging from the ceiling, where Yuan and Gao have scribbled their mottos. "Like what it says on the blackboard, everyone deserves a better life. You don't need to invest a lot of money to be happy. Changing your bowls or spoons for well-designed ones can help," says Yuan, who along with Gao used to work for a Beijing lifestyle magazine.

In her spare time, Yuan also writes poetry, which helps the shop's offerings creative. There are plants for sale, but none of them are in containers that can in any way be described as ordinary. There's a bunch of flowers growing in a mortar, more commonly using for pounding garlic, and some green things on a plate with soil.

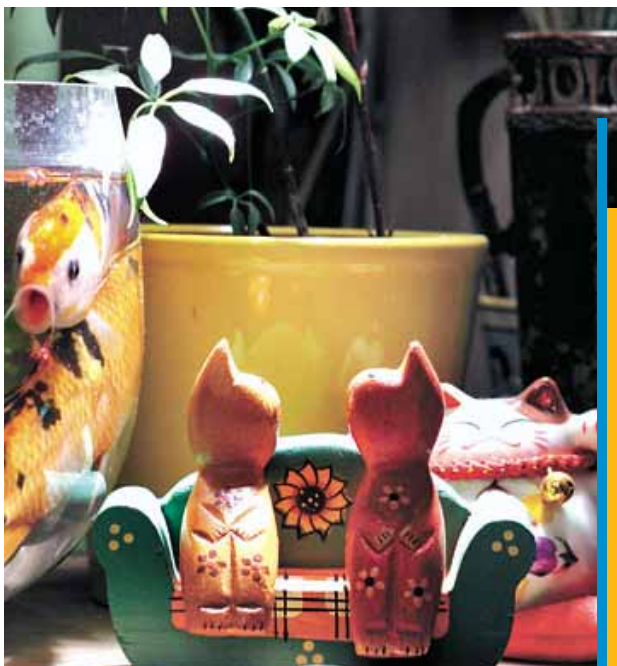
By the entrance is a wall lamp made from a gas can, drilled with holes forming the shop's name. "The workers told me they made similar things when they were children in the rural areas. We are easily pleased. It all depends on your creativity with ordinary things," Yuan says.

High Art Deco

Where: 27 Wudaoying Hutong, Dongcheng District

When: 3 – 10 pm

Tel: 13466557960



High Art Deco has many lovely pieces worth checking out.

Photos by Song Nannan



Kirei-Me Easy Hairpin, 18 yuan



Painless Hair Removal Sponge, 46 yuan

Photos by Huang Xiao

Hair-off practical beauty tools

By Annie Wei

It's hard to be a woman, but it's even harder to be a beautiful one. It demands much time, effort and money.

Unwanted hair removal is one prime example. Laser hair removal for the underarms, legs and bikini lines costs around 10,000 yuan for three sessions. A 20-minute Brazilian wax at a decent salon costs at least 270 yuan – and you have to get it done almost every month.

But thanks to Taobao.com, imported depilatories like Kirei-Me have become more affordable.

"Kirei," Japanese for beautiful, has Kirei-Me Magic Painless Hair Removal Sponge available on the shopping site for 46 yuan.

To use the sponge, rub its blue side in a circular motion on dry skin until all unwanted hair is removed. Afterwards, turn the sponge over and run the yellow surface over the skin. Each leg takes about 10 minutes to do. But there is no pain, water, soap or shaving cream involved that's why it's called "magic."

Taobao also sells Kirei-Me Easy Hairpin (18 yuan), which works like a scotch tape for unruly bangs, without ruining your lovely hairdo. Stick the rough side of the hairpin to your bangs to keep them off your eyes while reading, washing your face or doing laundry.

Taobao: vmm.taobao.com/

Big, thirst-quenching glass to welcome warmth

By Annie Wei

With warm weather just around the corner, the capital's bar scene is returning to life full-throttle.

This week, *Beijing Today* checks out two popular bars owned by long-time expats and which offer generous drinks at decent prices.



Fu Bar

Photo by Huang Xiao

Big drinks in speak-easy-style

By Annie Wei

Eight-month-old Fu Bar at the East Gate of the Workers' Stadium is now one of the most popular watering holes in town, drawing office workers after a long day at work, partiers who want a couple of drinks before their wild night begins and yuppies who want to chill out on a weekend.

Patrons find the bar's location charming: It is hidden inside Stadium Dog, an American hotdog shop, near the stadium's Gate 10. To find Fu Bar, head to the back of Stadium Dog, push a button that can be found on the right wall and – voila!

Such an architectural design is reminiscent of US speak-easys of the 1920s and 30s when the manufacture, sale and transportation of alcohol was illegal under the constitution. To get around the law, people set up "hidden" bars.

The live music every Tuesday and Wednesday night is also part of the tiny, two-story Fu Bar's allure.

The bar is owned by Chad Lager, former manager of Sanlitun crowd-drawers Tun, The Rickshaw and Luga's. Besides Lager, these places share something else in common: drinks that are big and strong. For instance, its G&T costs 30 yuan, house vodka tonic 30 yuan and martinis 50 yuan.

Its bestsellers are cocktails served in a special glass: a white ceramic Buddha that customers can take home for 100 yuan. Another popular drink is the house special, Henrick's gin tonic with cucumber (50 yuan).

On April 1, the bar will offer martinis for 1 yuan from 7 to 9 pm, Lager said. The promotion will continue every first day of each succeeding month, from 7 to 8 pm.

Bar goers who get hungry can head back to Stadium Dog to grab a hotdog for 20 yuan. It offers 11 kinds of toppings and 15 types of mustard.

Fu Bar

Where: Gates 10-11 Gongti Dongmen (inside Stadium Dog), Gongti Bei Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: Sunday to Thursday 3 pm – 2 am next day, Friday and Saturday 3 pm – 4 am next day

Tel: 6546 8364

Generous drinks and pizza for dessert

All bars in Nanluogu Xiang may look the same to you. But trust us, Maomaochong is worth a second look.

The small and cozy bar on Banchang Hutong, owned by an Australian T-shirt artist, moved to its current location two weeks ago from Wudaoying Hutong, where business was slower.

The proprietor named it Maomaochong – caterpillar – after he and his girlfriend discovered many beautiful caterpillars on a romantic trip to Yunnan Province. The full text of the story in Chinese can be found on the restroom walls.

The bar's best drinks can be found on its "winter menu." Our favorite is adult chai (30 yuan), home-made chai using Indian black cardamom and fresh ginger spiced up with a shot of cinnamon schnapps. All drinks are a generous 400 to 500 milliliters per glass.

Chocolate fans should try cookie (35 yuan), a mix of Bailey's, butterscotch schnapps, cinnamon schnapps and hot chocolate. Those

with a sweet tooth cannot go wrong with French toast (30 yuan), a marriage of Advocaat, rum, milk, cinnamon and honey.

On a chilly winter night, nothing at Maomaochong will warm you up better than its mulled wine (30 yuan), South Australian Shiraz spiced with cinnamon, cloves, ginger, brown sugar and fresh orange.

Its chocolate pizza (36 yuan; 8 inches) is really more of a dessert: dark chocolate and fruit served with vanilla ice cream on the side.

If you want "real" pizza, there's Maomaochong's special (58 yuan; 11 inches), topped with red onion and chilis. The garlic and herb pizza, meanwhile, only costs 15 yuan for 8 inches and 20 yuan for 11 inches.

Maomaochong

Where: 12 Bancong Hutong (off Nanluogu Xiang), Jiadaokou Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District

Open: 5:30 pm – midnight, daily except Tuesday
Tel: 6405 5718



Maomaochong offers good drinks in a warm and friendly atmosphere.

Photos provided by mmc-bar.com

Country's first heavy metal band returns to stage



Tang Dynasty band

Photo provided by Star Live

By He Jianwei

China's first heavy metal band Tang Dynasty is holding a long-awaited concert at Star Live March 28 for the release of its new two-song EP.

The songs represent the band's take on social issues, said vocalist Ding Wu. "Chen Fu" (Ups and Downs) describes the artists' impression of the existing social situation: people are like duckweed swept up in the tide.

"Elk's Tears" describes eagerness to protect the environment and to live in harmony with nature, but it also touches on the intense competition to get ahead in life.

The band will also revisit classics, like "A Dream Return to Tang Dynasty" and "Romantic Knight."

Together with Cui Jian and Hei Bao (Black Panther), Tang Dynasty heralded the beginning of a new rock and roll movement in 1990s China.

Founded in 1989, the band chose its name as a tribute to the Tang Dynasty (618-907), an era of openness and cosmopolitanism. Like Tang citizens, the band embraces the best of human culture and

cultural expression.

Its sound is part progressive rock and artistic metal and part traditional Chinese vocals with lyrical poetry and arrangements meant to harken back to the glorious days of ancient civilization.

The heavy metal group rose to fame in 1992 with the release of their debut album *A Dream Return to Tang Dynasty*, which sold 2 million copies worldwide and is considered one of the greatest in Chinese rock history.

Ding said the band is preparing for its fourth album, which will integrate styles from epic storytelling and traditional poetry and paintings.

"The two songs in the EP do not represent the concept of our new album," Ding said, "But I'm sure they embrace our original spirit."

Tang Dynasty New EP Release Concert

Where: Star Live, 3/F Tango, 79 Heping Xi Jie, Dongcheng District

When: March 28, 8 pm

Admission: 100 yuan advance purchase, 120 yuan at the door

Tel: 6402 5080

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Friday, March 19

Exhibition Being Moved – Ruben Malchow and Steffi Jung

Photo Exhibition

Where: Paper Bar, 138 Gulou Dong Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: Until March 29, daily, 6pm – midnight

Admission: Free

Tel: 8401 5080

From Syria to China – Yassar Khardour Photo Exhibition

Where: Sanwei Bookstore, 60 Fuxingmen Nei Dajie, Xicheng District

When: Until March 28, daily, 12:30-9 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 6601 3204

Movie

Animanera (Dark Soul, 2008)

Where: Italian Cultural Institute, 2 Dong Er Jie, Sanlitun Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 7:30 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 6532 2187

Der Überfall (Hold Up, 2000)

Where: Canadian International School of Beijing, 38 Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 8 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 6465 7788

Nightlife

The Secret Machines 2010 China Tour

Where: Yugongyishan, 3-2 Zhangzizhong Lu, Dongcheng District

When: 9:30 pm

Admission: 150 yuan advance purchase, 200 yuan at the door

Tel: 6404 2711

Inner-Mongolian band Hanggai

Where: Weibozhiyan Club, Room 2308, 3/F North Building, SOHO Shangdu, 8 Dongdaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 9 pm

Admission: 40 yuan advance purchase, 50 yuan at the door, 30 yuan for students

Tel: 5900 0969

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Saturday, March 20

Exhibition Echoing with Nature – Group Exhibition by Gu Zong, Chen

Xiaolin and Cheng Xiangjun

Where: Dandel Art Space, Beijing Image Base, Building 1, 3 Guangqu Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until May 13, daily except Sunday and Monday, 9:30 am – 6 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 6770 8966

Nightlife

Arrows Made of Desire

Where: Jianghu Bar, 7 Dongmianhua Hutong, Jiaodakou Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: 9:30 pm

Admission: 30 yuan

advance purchase, 40 yuan at the door

Tel: 6401 4611

Wang Fanrui Unplugged

Where: Mao Livehouse, 111 Gulou Dong Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: 8:30 pm

Admission: 60 yuan

Tel: 6586 0065 ext. 8213

Movie



L'homme de Chevet (Cartagena, 2009)

Where: French Cultural Center, 1/F, Guangcai International Mansion, 18 Gongti Xi Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 7:30 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 6553 2627

Gegen die Wand (Head-On, 2004)

Where: Broadway Cinematheque, 2/F Building 4, North section of the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA), 1 Xiangheyuan Lu, Dongcheng District

When: 7:30 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 8438 8258 ext. 8008

Sunday, March 21

Nightlife Mongolian band Ajinai

Where: D-22, 242

Chengfu Lu, Haidian District

When: 9 pm

Admission: 30 yuan, 20

yuan for students

Tel: 6265 3177



Edouard Ferlet Jazz Piano Recital

Where: Forbidden City Con-

cert Hall (inside Zhongshan Park), 18 Zhaodengyu Lu, Xicheng District

When: 7:30 pm

Admission: 30-380 yuan

Tel: 6417 7845

Movie

Brokeback Mountain (2005)

Where: China Film Archive, 3 Wenhuiyuan Lu, Xiaoxitian, Haidian District

When: 4 pm

Admission: 35 yuan

Tel: 8229 6153

Dieci Inverni (Ten Winters, 2009)

Where: Italian Cultural Institute, 2 Dong Er Jie, Sanlitun Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 7:30 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 8229 6153

Exhibition

Kehinde Wiley – Legends of Unity

Where: Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA), 798 Art District, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until April 11, daily except Monday, 10 am – 7 pm

Admission: 15 yuan, free for students

Tel: 8459 9269

Once Upon an Apple – Ma Yuan Solo Exhibition

Where: Line Gallery, 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu,

Chaoyang District

When: Until April 6, daily except Monday and Tuesday, 10 am – 6 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 5978 9916



Upcoming

Concert

No Name Jazz

Where: Nine Theater, Chaoyang Culture Center, 17 Jintai Li, Chaoyang District

When: March 28, 2:30 pm

Admission: 50 yuan, 30 yuan for students

Tel: 8599 1188, 8599 6011

Stage in April

Concert

Francesco Piemontesi Piano Recital

Where: Forbidden City Concert Hall (inside Zhongshan Park), 18 Zhaodengyu Lu, Xicheng District

When: April 4, 7:30 pm

Admission: 90-380 yuan

Tel: 6417 7845

David Braid Jazz Piano

Recital

Where: Peking University Hall, 5 Yiheyuan Lu, Haidian District

When: April 10, 7 pm

Admission: 100-280 yuan

Tel: 6275 8452

Dance

Pharaoh's Daughter – Bolshoi Theater China Tour

Where: Opera House of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: April 30 – May 2, 7:30 pm

Admission: 280-1,280 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

Drama

21 Carat

Where: Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: April 13-18, 7:30 pm

Admission: 100-680 yuan

Tel: 6551 8058

TNT's Macbeth

Where: Peking University Hall, 5 Yiheyuan Lu, Haidian District

When: April 23-25, 7 pm

Admission: 100-200 yuan

Tel: 6275 8452

Design for Living

Where: Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: April 29 – May 3, 7:30 pm

Admission: 100-880 yuan

Tel: 6551 8058

Musical

I Have a Date With Spring

Where: Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: April 7-11, 7:30 pm

Admission: 180-580 yuan

Tel: 6551 8058

Opera

Tchaikovsky's Eugene Onegin

Where: Opera House of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: April 24-27, 7:30 pm

Admission: 280-1,280 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

(By He Jianwei)

Deadly pancreatic cancer linked to sodas

By Li Zhixin

Doctors have warned for decades that soft-drink lovers face a serious risk of tooth decay, but sugar-laden beverages may carry a more sinister risk: cancer.

Soft drinks boost cancer risk

A recently released study from the University of Minnesota finds that people who drink as few as two soft drinks a week face almost double the risk of deadly pancreatic cancer.

"Their risk of getting pancreatic cancer over the time period of the study was almost two times higher than their counterparts, who were consuming few or no sugar-sweetened beverages in the study," said Mark Pereira, the doctor who led the study.

Writing in the journal *Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers & Prevention*, Pereira and his colleagues said they studied 60,524 men and women at the Singapore Chinese Health Study over 14 years.

Over that time, 140 of the volunteers developed pancreatic cancer. Those who drank two or more soft drinks a week had an 87 percent higher risk of being among those who developed pancreatic cancer. The study only applies to consumption of regular soda, not diet soft drinks or fruit juices.

The problem might be the quantity of sugar in the drinks, said Pereira. However, he noted that people who drink sweetened sodas often have other poor health habits.

"The high levels of sugar in soft drinks may be increasing the level of insulin in the body, which we think contributes to pancreatic cancer cell growth," he said in a statement.

Insulin, which helps the body balance sugar levels, is made in the pancreas. More sugar means more insulin. "Insulin has been shown to promote the growth of most tissues including cancer cells, so that might be the mechanism if this is cause and effect," he said.

But Susan Mayne of the Yale Cancer Center at Yale University in Connecticut was cautious. "Although this study found a risk, the finding was based on a relatively small number of cases and it remains unclear whether it is a causal association or not," said Mayne, who serves on the board of the journal, which is published by the American Association for Cancer Research.

Other studies linked pancreatic cancer to red meat, especially burned or charred meat.

Pancreatic cancer is one of the deadliest forms of cancer with 230,000 cases globally. Some researchers believe high sugar intake may fuel some forms of cancer, although evidence has been contradictory. Tumor cells use more glucose than other cells.

One 355-milliliter can of non-diet soda contains about 130 calories, almost all of them from sugar. While fruit juices are also often high in sugar, people usually consume smaller quantities.

Tips

1. If you're at increased risk for pancreatic cancer, opt for an early screening. Ask your doctor about getting a "barium swallow" test, which can illuminate your digestive organs on an X-ray.

2. If you have been diagnosed with cancer of the pancreas, you may be experiencing feelings of depression, despair or isolation. Be aware that support groups and treatment from mental health professionals can help to overcome these.



CFP Photo

Risk factors from past studies

According to the Chinese Anti-Cancer Association, risk factors for pancreatic cancer include:

- 1. Gender:** Men develop the cancer more often than women.
- 2. Age:** The risk goes up with age. Almost 90 percent of patients are older than 40.
- 3. Smoking:** The risk is two to three times higher in smokers. Between 20 and 30 percent of pancreatic cancers are thought to be caused by smoking.
- 4. Obesity:** Studies correlated increased pancreatic

cancer rates with people who are significantly overweight and who do not get much exercise.

5. Diabetes: Pancreatic cancer is more common in diabetics. Most of the risk is found in people with type 2 diabetes. The reason is not known. In some patients, the cancer seems to have caused the diabetes, not the other way around.

6. Chronic pancreatitis: This is a long-term inflammation of the pancreas. It is linked with a slightly higher risk of

pancreatic cancer, but most people with this condition do not get pancreatic cancer.

7. Cirrhosis of the liver: Cirrhosis is a scarring of the liver. It happens in people with liver damage from things like hepatitis and alcohol abuse. People with cirrhosis seem to have an increased risk of pancreatic cancer.

8. Work exposure: Heavy exposure at work to certain pesticides, dyes and chemicals may increase the risk of getting pancreatic cancer.

9. Family history: The disease seems to run in some families.

10. Gene changes: Inherited gene changes are abnormal copies of certain genes that can be passed from parent to child. Some of the genes that cause pancreatic cancer have been found by scientists and can be recognized by genetic testing.

11. Stomach problems: Having too much stomach acid or a bacteria called *H. pylori* in the stomach may increase the risk of pancreatic cancer.

The road to prevention

"Cancer of the pancreas is a particularly difficult form of the disease. It is virtually asymptomatic in its earliest stages, making detection unlikely until symptoms become present during advanced stages. However, there are a number of preventative measures you can take," said Shao Yongfu, a doctor at the Cancer Institute & Hospital of Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences.

1. Toss the smokes. Cigarettes are a risk factor in virtually all forms of cancer, and pancreatic cancer is no exception. Quitting smoking may help prevent other serious health conditions.

2. Keep a healthy weight. Regular exercise is an important factor to prevent the development of pancreatic cancer. If you want to begin a weight loss program, remember that physicians strongly recommend weightloss be slow and steady rather than rapid.

3. Exercise regularly. Sustained aerobic activity increases the body's intake of oxygen and antioxidants. Exercise also increases the production of a protein called IGFBP-1. A new study of patients with pancreatic cancer suggests that lower levels of this blood protein may be a good

indicator of increased pancreatic cancer risk. Patients with low blood levels of IGFBP-1 were at approximately twice the risk of developing pancreatic cancer.

4. Reduce consumption of red meat. Red meat, as well as processed and carbonized meat, has been linked to pancreatic cancer. Replacing red meat with fish, poultry and other foods like cheese, nuts and seafoods rich in vitamin D, is definitely a move in the right direction.

5. Eat whole grains, fruits and vegetables. Abundant consumption of fruits and vegetables sig-

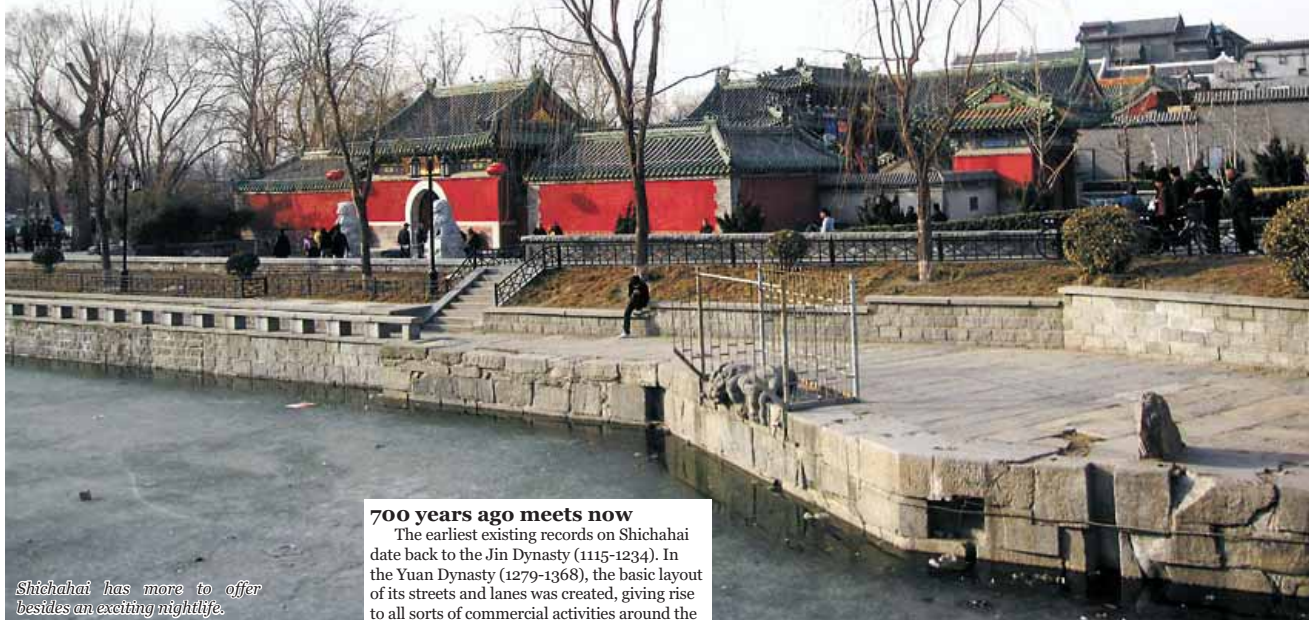
nificantly reduces the risk of pancreatic cancer.

People who eat five servings of fruits and vegetables daily, in particular vegetables rich in folic acid such as spinach, broccoli and asparagus, lower their risk of developing pancreatic cancer by 75 percent. Another recent study shows that smokers who eat many vegetables may reduce their risk of pancreatic cancer by 70 percent.

6. Think positive. Positive thinking has a dramatic impact on genetic expression. Cultivating moments of peace can produce positive changes in the body.

Gems of the Lake of Ten Temples

Rediscovering ancient temples in Shichahai



Shichahai has more to offer besides an exciting nightlife.

By Zhang Dongya

At the mention of Shichahai, often associated with Houhai, people picture rows of crowded bars, restaurants and shops; a glistening lake filled with paddle boats; and fleets of tricycles taking tourists around the *hutong*.

But Shichahai has more to offer. Meaning "lake of ten temples," the body of water got its name from being surrounded by 10 temples in ancient times.

Where are those temples now? Some are well preserved and are frequented by tourists, others are in various states of disrepair and the rest have disappeared. But there is still enough to see on a day trip; all you need is a sense of curiosity.



Visitors can get a glimpse of Nianhua Temple's other halls from a neighboring courtyard.

700 years ago meets now

The earliest existing records on Shichahai date back to the Jin Dynasty (1115-1234). In the Yuan Dynasty (1279-1368), the basic layout of its streets and lanes was created, giving rise to all sorts of commercial activities around the busy harbor. Barges loaded with grains from the south could be seen lining the lake. During the last two dynasties, the Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1644-1912), it became a residential area for the aristocrats.

Shichahai consists of three lakes: Qianhai (Front Sea), Xihai (West Sea) and Houhai (Hind Sea). They are located northwest of the Forbidden City and north of Beihai Lake.

In an age where demolitions are the norm, around the lake there are a surprising number of *siheyuan*, or courtyard homes, including the Ya'er Hutong and Yandai Xiejie.

The area is also host to 10 popular Taoist and Buddhist temples and several former royal mansions and gardens. The most well-known are Prince Gong's Mansion and Prince Chun's Mansion.

Six temples rediscovered

A tour of Shichahai's temples, organized by 90 Percent Travel agency and which *Beijing Today* joined, sets off from Gulou Avenue, Xicheng District. The first stop on the two-hour trip is Shuangsi, or Twin Temples, in Shuangsi Hutong, the only hutong named after a temple in Shichahai.

The Twin Temples were built by eunuchs during the Ming Dynasty, in 1465. It was divided into two sections: Jiaci Temple in the east and Guangji Temple in the west. Jiaci has since disappeared, while Guangji has been converted into a hotel called Sunshine Old Yard Hotel. The hotel has kept the temple's original structure.

Not far from the Twin Temples is Nianhua Temple, or Summer Flower Temple, a huge temple with 184 rooms. It was also built in Ming, in 1581, but did not gain its current name until the Qing Dynasty. The temple faces south, with the Bell Tower and Drum Tower to its east and west, respectively.

Now only the temple's main hall can be clearly seen from outside; the other halls and yards, surrounded by high walls, can only be glimpsed from a neighboring courtyard. Visitors can also see the ruins left by a fire that consumed the Hall of Scriptures and Sutras last December. At the temple's backyard is the printing house of Renmin University Press.



Only Nianhua Temple's main hall can be seen from outside.



Old brick walls surround Nianhua Temple

Photo provided by 90 Percent Travel



The Twin Temple's western Guangji Temple of has been converted into a hotel.

Photos by Sherry

Continued on page 21...



The Fire God Taoist Temple draws groups of old residents who like to chat and play Chinese chess.



Guanyue Temple has been turned into the local office of the Tibetan Autonomous Region. Photo by Juliet



Guanghua Temple, known for removing misfortune, attracts hordes of visitors.



A pagoda and pole in Guanghua Temple where flages are raised during Buddhist holidays and events. Photos by Sherry

... continued from page 20

Nianhua used to be the largest temple in the city. Its current lamentable state adds to the worries people have about the preservation of historical sites.

Onward to Gulou West Avenue is Guanyue Temple, which was named after the statues of Guan Yu and Yue Fei that can be found inside the building. Built in Qing, it used to be a family temple for Prince Chunxian, the seventh son of the Daoguang Emperor of Qing. It is now the local office of the Tibetan Autonomous Region. From the gate, people can see the temple halls and shadow walls with colorful glazed patterns.

Opposite the gate is Prince Chun's Mansion. Visitors enter through the back gate, which used to be the entryway for horse-drawn carriages. One of the city's best-preserved royal mansions, it is now home to ordinary Beijingers who added two buildings in the courtyard.

From the second floor, visitors can see the entire mansion's layout, including the temple halls' intricate design, a reminder of the prosperity the nobles enjoyed centuries ago.

The tour then heads toward the lakes. Near Houhai Bei Yan, the north bank of Shichahai, is Little Longhua Temple. The small structure was built in Ming as an auxiliary to the gigantic Nianhua Temple. Longhua now houses Beihai Kindergarten.

Along the north bank of Shichahai is Guanghua Temple, which attracts hordes of visitors. The reason: the Buddhist temple is known for removing misfortune. The Yuan-era building is also the headquarters of the Beijing Municipal Buddhist Society.

Facing the temple is a large shadow wall with words by Namu Amitabha, the Buddha of Infinite Light. Visitors can worship the Buddha at the Heavenly King Hall, located in the first yard, which is open to visitors regularly. The rest of the halls are only open every 1st and 15th of the month in the lunar calendar – the best dates to worship the Buddha. On both sides of the building are poles that fly colorful flags during Buddhist holidays and events.

Passing by Yinding Bridge, which connects Qianhai and Houhai, is the last stop on the tour: the Fire God Taoist Temple, on the east bank of Shichahai.

Built in the Tang Dynasty (618-907), it is one of the country's oldest Taoist temples. The guide said there are many temples to the Fire God in the capital, since old Beijing had a lot of wooden houses and other structures. Offerings to the god were believed to ensure safety and longevity.

Around the temple are groups of older residents playing Chinese chess, cards and mah-jong. Take a break to soak in the simple joys of local life.

Four other temples

There are four more temples that the tour did not cover: the Bell-ringing Goddess Temple, Longevity Maitreya Temple, Three Kings Temple and Huitong Temple. The first two are located around Houhai, while the last two are near Xihai.

Except for the Three Kings Temple, the rest are in varying status of ruin, but people who are interested can search them out.

Travel information

Tour: Temple Discovery by the Lake of Ten Temples
Travel Agency: 90 Percent
Travel Cost: Free monthly event
Tel: 5962 6850, 15117916648
Email: info@90percenttravel.com
Web: 90percenttravel.com

What is included:

1. English-speaking guide
2. Beijing traditional snacks

Dining

**Welcome spring with tea**

Usher in spring with Lobby Lounge's fresh, handpicked green teas. Order a soothing cup, starting from 90 yuan, at the luxurious lounge or steep your own at home by purchasing a beautiful gift box.

Where: Lobby Lounge, China World Hotel, 1 Jianguomen Wai Dajie, Chaoyang District

Tel: 6505 2266 ext. 37 or 6505 5838

Soup, sandwich and sushi bar

Select Panini, Focaccia or simple rye toast and fill it up with a selection of 36 fillings. Compliment it with the soup of the day or a simple salad from the deli counter. The sushi bar offers fresh California maki rolls and traditional sushi and sashimi as alternatives to made-to-order sandwiches.

Where: CBD, Grand Millennium Beijing, 7 Dongsanhuan Zhong Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 11:30 am - 10:30 pm
Tel: 6530 9383

**Crispy roast suckling pig**

This spring, try an array of traditional Chinese dishes such as crispy roast suckling pig at Rouge Restaurant. The pig is specially prepared by Executive Chef He and his talented team - guaranteed to tantalize your taste buds.

Where: Rouge Restaurant, Crown Plaza Beijing Zhong-guancun, 106 Zhichun Lu, Haidian District

When: 11:30 am - 2:30 pm, 5:30-10 pm

Cost: 598 yuan (add 15 percent service charge)

Tel: 5993 8888

Hotel

**Kempinski Beijing introduces new foods, beverages**

Kempinski Hotel Beijing Lufthansa Center has innovative European life-style concepts for business and leisure guests alike. Its Italian and pastry cooking classes are hosted by renowned head chefs from Europe and teach traditions and recipes through demonstrations. Chefs will culinary adventures and offer students a chance to practice hands-on. The new European in-room breakfast will give guests a taste of European

hospitality — a feast for the eyes and the palate — in peace and comfort.

Shangri-La Guilin offers cruise on Li River

The newly opened Shangri-La Hotel Guilin offers guests an exclusive luxury cruise on the Li River. From now until October 31, guests can book a Suite Cruise package and enjoy two nights in an executive suite, a 90-minute morning or afternoon guided tour, a gourmet four-course meal cooked onboard by the hotel's executive chef, daily breakfast for two and full Horizon Club access and privileges. The Suite Cruise package is priced 8,888 yuan for two and includes round-trip airport and jetty transfers by hotel limousine.

Tel: 0773 269 8888

New general manager at Courtyard

Billy Low is the new general man-

ager of Courtyard at the Marriott Beijing Northeast. Low has 21 years of experience in the hospitality industry. He joined Marriott International in 1995 and has worked in Marriott Singapore, Marriott Kota Kinabalu, Renaissance Kota Bharu, JW Marriott Shanghai Tomorrow Square and Marriott Executive Apartment Palm Spring Beijing.

Marriott Michelin chef Tam tours Beijing

Marriott International Hotels is proud to announce that Michelin Star Chef Tam Sek Lun is visiting Beijing and Tianjin on a culinary tour to demonstrate his award-winning dishes. From April 9 to 12, at the Marriott International hotels in Beijing and Tianjin, Chef Tam will collaborate with Chinese chefs to add his signature dishes to the menu. He will also host a cooking class in Beijing on April 11 where participants can learn a few tips for home-style cooking.

Aviation

PAL soars to 70th year; 70,000 free seats up for grabs

Philippine Airlines is starting a year-long celebration to prepare for its 70th anniversary next March. Promotions include up to 70,000 free seats to be given away throughout the year. The seat raffle covers customers who purchase PAL tickets in the Philippines and via PAL's website, and who travel between March 16 and December 31. A total 16,000 winners will be selected: prizes include free tickets for routes equivalent to those in tickets bought and flown.

The fares promo, known as the "Anniversary Fare Special," features generously discounted rates on all domestic PAL routes, including a flat rate of 700 pesos (105 yuan) on one-way flights between Manila and Luzon or the Visayas, and of 1,700 pesos (254 yuan) to or from Mindanao. International flights are covered by the promo, though fares vary according to route.

For more details, visit philippineairlines.com or call its hotline at (632) 855-8888.

Jetstar paints plane for Quiksilver Pro

Australia's low-fare airline Jetstar, together with iconic surf brand Quiksilver, has created a painted aircraft to launch the 2010 Quiksilver Pro on the Gold Coast. The aircraft landed at the Gold Coast on March 3 with some of the world's best surfers on board, including nine-time World Champion Kelly Slater and Australia's rising star Julian Wilson.



Event

The Opposite House

The Opposite House will have its second collaboration with Pekin Fine Arts to exhibit "A-Sua, Imbued with Life Force" by Chinese artist Marvin Mintofang and the semi-abstract figures of "Karma" by Korean artist Bae Hyung Kyung.

Where: Atrium, The Opposite House, Building 1, 11 Sanlitun Lu, Chaoyang District

When: April 1 - June 30
Tel: 6417 6688

**Secretary's week**

Treat your secretary to a lavish spread at Elements. Select from a

range of fresh pan-Asian dishes prepared at live cooking stations and savour the imaginative selection of delicacies at the sinfully good dessert buffet. All secretaries will receive a cocktail and special gift courtesy of the Hilton Beijing.

Where: Elements, Hilton Beijing, 1 Dongfang Lu, Chaoyang District
When: April 19-23

Cost: 168 yuan lunch buffet, 208 yuan dinner buffet (add 15 percent surcharge)

Tel: 5865 5020

Earth Hour

Traders Hotel Beijing is a strong supporter of corporate social responsibility. As part of its effort to fight global warming, the hotel will join others in Earth Hour, an event organized by the World Wildlife Fund on March 27, between 8:30 and 9:30 pm.

During that time, Traders will turn off non-essential lighting on guestroom corridors and in the staff areas, as well as all exterior lighting. Lighting in the lobby and restaurants will be reduced to night mode.

(By Sun Feng)

Chinglish story

This column focuses on Chinglish mistakes in our daily life. If you have any experiences to share, send them to Wang Yu at wangyu2008@ynet.com.

Not all birds are created equal

By Zhang Dongya

Literal interpretations of a foreign language often results in jokes and embarrassment.

But sometimes, admitting your ignorance to a foreigner is not bad. You might learn something new and forge a closer bond with someone who is also dealing with the difficulties of learning a new language: Chinese.

Jerry came to Beijing from Boston six months ago to study Chinese and help out with the family import business. I met him through colleagues and have since helped him navigate the local culture and practices.

Last Christmas, he went back home to spend the holiday with his family and brought back a gift for me.

"Hey, when can we meet up?" He called me on my cell phone a day after he arrived. "I think a bird may have brought you something from the States."

"What kind of bird?" I said hesitantly. I immediately thought about a Chinese swear word, *niaoren*, or "bird person," meaning a bastard or stupid person. But the term is also used affectionately, to express familiarity between friends, so I thought maybe Jerry was referring to a close friend of his.

But Jerry answered, "A secret bird," putting emphasis on secret.

To avoid any misunderstanding, I decided to tell him the meaning of "bird" that I knew. He laughed good-naturedly.

"In English, 'a little bird told me' or 'a little bird brought something' is a way of saying it's a secret who told you or who brought something," he said.

Niaoren is also a popular term among netizens, dotting blogs and online bulletin boards.

But it has a much longer history. In ancient times, people used it to make disparaging remarks about others.

The word appears in the early Ming-Dynasty masterpiece *Outlaws of the Marsh*. In Section 22, Song Jiang, leader of the novel's 108 heroes, got drunk and bumped into a man, who angrily cried, "Who the hell are you?" The writer used *niaoren* instead of Song's name.

It was used in a similar context in *Amazing Stories II: the Second Series of Striking the Table in Amazement at the Wondrous*, another Ming-era work.

I shared these with Jerry when we met for lunch the following week.

"Wow, amazing piece of information! And here I was, only wanting to give you a present," he said with a grin, handing me a bag of pasta and a tin of mints with US President Obama's face on it.



Blacklist

This is a column of words or phrases commonly misused by Chinese speakers. If you're planning to be an English teacher, reporter or employee of a multinational company, then watch out for this page each week.

1. Greats

Professor Zhu Shida (ZS): In English, we have adjectives with the definite article to denote nouns, for instance, the rich, the poor, the great. You will be very surprised at the first glance at "greats." How can an adjective take a plural form? I read a sentence in an English newspaper that says "Bernard Haitink, 80, conducts a performance that echoes past greats." "Great" can be a noun, meaning "a great human." When you say "greats," it means "great people." This is a very exceptional case. It is not every adjective that can be turned into a noun in such a way. For instance, we cannot say "poors," denoting "the poor people." Another similar example I can think of now is "dear." You may say: He is a dear. They are my dears.

Native speaker Steven Sandor (SS):

Actually, many adjectives can be used as nouns – the question is one of pluralization. Many of these adjective-to-noun conversions do not take an s when pluralizing, like regular plurals. For instance, "poors" would pluralize as "poor": The charity was devoted to serving the poor. Comfortable is another adjective that can stand as a plural noun as in the goal of good journalism: To comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable. If you find this confusing, just pretend these pluralize like "deer."

2. There are certainly differences between what concerns netizens most and what concerns the government most.

ZS: In terms of rhetoric this is not a good sentence. When two sentences share grammatical structure and words, repeated words can be dropped in the latter sentence without harming the meaning. The lack of repetition makes the meaning more laconic and forceful. Consider this example: The film producer is trying to cut the costs and the director is trying to cut the cast. To make it rhetorically better, it should be: The film producer is trying to cut the costs and the director the cast. For the same reason, the original sentence should be: There are certainly differences between what concerns netizens most and what the government.

SS: The professor is correct, but I can suggest an even more concise correction: Of course, there are differences between what most concerns netizens and government. This wording carries much greater impact, and the early pause gives the reader pause before the punch.

3. They have to be careful what they wish for.

ZS: In English, there are only very few adjectives that can take an object clause. We may right say: I am very glad that you have come back as fit as a fiddle. However, "careful" is definitely not among them. You will have to say: They have to be careful of what they wish for. Similarly, we say: We have to be mindful of our past mistakes. You may say: We have to mind our past mistakes. But you can't say: We have to be mindful our past mistakes. It is wrong. If you need to have an object clause, you may say: We have to be mindful of the fact that we have committed mistakes in the past too. Another example is "forgetful": She has become very forgetful of things.

SS: The reality is that "be careful what you wish for" is an exceptionally common phrase – one bordering on cliché. It was the title of an Eminem song and a teen horror novella by R.L. Stine. Few native speakers would ever elect to add the word "of" as suggested. That gripe aside, the professor's advice is perfectly sound.

Chinglish on the way

This column aims to identify Chinglish in public areas. If you see any Chinglish signs, please send a picture of it to wangyu2008@ynet.com together with your name and address.

By Tiffany Tan

This looks like a lot of scribbling work for somebody, or worse, an invitation to vandalize. Does the writer realize, that "everywhere" includes the tabletop?

If I didn't know any better, I would have thought this sign was another classic example of Chinese customer service at its bare minimum – which can border on the rude to the uninitiated: Do as I say and do not ask any more questions. Everything you need to know is on the sign.

This sign does not mean to offend in any way, but it got on the road to ridiculous when it separated the words *dao* and *qian*, which separately mean "everywhere" and "sign." As one unit, they mean "signing desk."

Knowing this, the next step is for the customer to bring out the necessary documents and sign along the dotted line. Just there, not everywhere.

Sign everywhere



Movie of the week

There is no shortage of vampire movies these days, but this one is a new twist on an old genre: what if the undead were the majority?

From beginning to end, *Daybreakers* is gory fun. There are interesting plot twists and its more metaphorical aspects are upfront, but not preachy. The special effects and action scenes are top-notch, particularly the gruesome sets at the film's climax.

The Spierig brothers insert scary jolts at regular intervals. The cast is great, but Sam Neill gets a special mention. Neill does not chew scenery as the main villain, but he certainly nibbles here and there.

Willem Dafoe is good too, as always.

Daybreakers also passes a key horror movie test: when you leave the theater, the outside world does not look quite as reassuring as it normally does. It is well worth seeing.

Synopsis

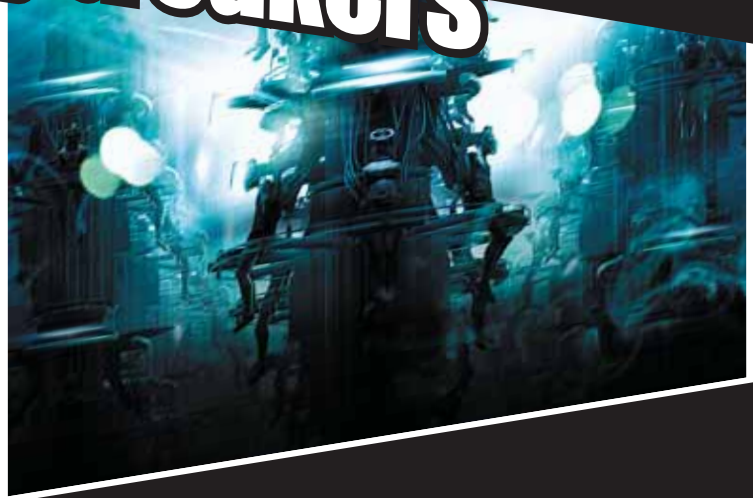
In a world 10 years into the future, vampires make up the majority of the population: only 5 percent of the population is human.

This presents a particular challenge as the vampires' food supply – human blood – is dwindling and rationing is now the norm. There is growing evidence that vampires deprived of an adequate blood supply are evolving into wild, vile creatures that attack anyone and anything in order to survive.

Dr. Edward Dalton, a vampire and hematologist who works for a pharmaceutical firm, has been working on finding an artificial blood supply that will meet the vampire society's needs. He is sympathetic to humans and sees his work as a way of alleviating their suffering.

But his views on finding a solution change considerably when he meets a vampire who found a way to reclaim his human form.

Daybreakers (2009)



Scene 1:

At Edward's apartment

Edward (E): Frankie.

Frankie (F): Hey, Ed.

E: I hardly recognized you.

F: It's only been a few months. I got something for you.

E: What's this?

F: What the fuck do you think it is? Some birthday party, bro.

E: Yeah. Well, I've turned thirty-five 10 times. Birthdays are pointless.

F: Bullshit! Let's have a drink.

E: It smells human.

F: 100 percent pure. That's one of the perks (1) of serving your country. I hear even that pig shit you drink is getting hard to find.

E: I can't.

F: F---k that. You need it.

E: Yeah, well ...

F: Life is a bitch and then you don't die. Come on.

E: I don't touch human blood.

F: You don't touch human blood. You work for a company that uses humans like f---king cattle.

E: Don't tell me how to live my life, little brother.

F: Then don't act all high and mighty, big brother. Look Ed, your company is working on some type of fake blood, that's one thing, but we all know that their money comes from farming humans. Are we going to pick up from exactly where we left off?

E: I don't hunt humans. That is your job.



Scene 2:

At the vineyard

Lionel Elvis Cormac (L): Jar, this is Ed.

Jarvis Bayom (J): Ed! Usually when there's a vampire around, I'm the one *shitting my pants* (2). You'd better be worth the risk, man.

L: Jar's made contact with the largest human group we've found in a long time. And he's going to bring them back here.

J: I set up more cots in the cellar. We'll stay in radio contact and keep you updated.

E: Is this place safe?

L: Being human in a world full of vampires is about as safe as bare backing a \$5 whore.

J: This is home, Doc. But none of us are safe.

L: I owe that girl my life. She found me after I was *shaked-n-baked* (3) and brought me here. I want you to meet someone. Ed, this is senator Wes Turner.

Wes Turner (W): Hey. You made it.

E: Yeah. Barely.

Colin: More damn vampires.

L: Back off, Colin. They're trying to help.

W: Hey. Being a vampire and a politician, it can be hard to make friends.

L: Wes knows enough vampires in office (4) that want this cure. And more importantly, will use it for the right reasons.

W: We want to rebuild the human race. But a way back can be a dangerous thing, in the wrong hands. We're an endangered species, Doc.

E: It's time we changed all that.



Scene 3:

At Bromley's office

Bromley (B): Ed. I myself was feeling the effects of deprivation. But as of yesterday, it's all a thing of the past.

E: What's the cure?

B: You know, I always thought it would be you that would *come up with* (5) a stable substitute. Not Christopher. But, I guess I was wrong. Look. We go into mass production in two days. It's never been about a cure. It's about repeat business. So you see, I don't need you anymore. The truth is: You've always been a coward.

E: What did it feel like to turn your own daughter? Oh, you didn't do it, did you? You couldn't, could you? You had

my brother do it for you. So who's the fucking coward?

B: Your blood?

[*Bromley feels is something wrong with his body.*]

E: Vampires think they own this world that the humans have to hide from them. That ain't true. Every day, the sun comes up. And every day the vampires have to hide. Vampires can never survive. That's the truth. Elvis Presley once said: "Truth is like the sun. You can *shut it out* (6) for a time, but it ain't going away."

B: What have you done to me?

E: Mr. Bromley. Welcome back to humanity. Now you get to die.

Vocabulary

- perk:** [informal] an incidental payment, benefit or privilege
- shit one's pants:** to frighten or to scare badly
- shaked-n-baked:** here means terribly wounded
- in office:** in power
- come up with:** to produce
- shut out:** to hide from view

(By Huang Daohen)